PHILIPPINE Sunday INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Sunday, January 13, 2008 ▲▲ Vol. 22 | No. 11

Editor's Note: Now on its 17th year, the Inquirer's Filipino of the Year honors a living Filipino who made the most positive impact the past year. Eligible to vote were Inquirer editors and assistant editors.

There were 44 voters this year. Fr. Ed Panlilio topped the nominees with 20 followed closely by Chief Justice Reynato Puno with 15 votes. Other nominees were Justices Teresita de Castro, Diosdado Peralta and Francisco Villaruz Jr. of the Sandiganbayan special division that tried and found ex-President Joseph Estrada guilty on two counts of plunder (9); Stanislao Formoso (2); Filipinos who made it to the summit of Mt. Everest (2) and Team Yehey (2), the country's first solar car team that finished 21th out of 20 teams in the race of solar-powered cars in Australia.

FILIPINO OF THE YEAR 2007

GOVERNOR ED PANLILIO

Hope where despair deepest

"AMONG" ED PANLILIO FIRST TURNED plain-dealing prophet of hope, is the Inquirer's Filipino of the Year for 2007.

The governor of Pampanga, according to his cocoine mentors, is having a do-or-die struggle with the 3 Rs of no-holds-barred political runners—recount, recall and "requiem."

The first refers to the election protest his closest rival lost the May 2007 polls filed against him; the third to the death threats he has received. The second is an unusual and timely card card in Philippine politics...a recall provision to remove him from office, which his political enemies are poised to file as soon as the one-year condition is met.

All three affect proof that the slimmer win-any-race election victory of Panlilio is a silver cha

MORE A10

THE MIRACLE HAPPENS PAPA hands raised and draped in prayer, priest-on-leave Ed Panlilio took his oath as Pampanga governor on June 30, 2007, at the provincial capitol. His pledge: "To make it a capital for the poor." PHOTO BY ERWIN ORTEGA

GMA to veto budget if ...

Andaya says Palace nothing to do with P13.5-B pork

By TJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO COULD USE HER VETO power if the House of Representatives fails to stick to the proposed 2008 national budget of P1.227 trillion that she submitted to Congress.

This was according to Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. who said yesterday Malacañang had no involvement in the P13.5-billion "insertion" to the pork barrel of congressmen.

"Malacañang has nothing to do with it," Andaya told the Inquirer. "Without engaging the members of Congress in an argument, (Ms Arroyo) has veto power. This is something we can do [later], but it's best for the two chambers to talk things out," referring to the House and the Senate which have yet to thresh out their versions of the budget bill in the bicameral conference committee.

The Senate and House panels in the committee, led by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and Rep. Eduardo Laguian, respectively, are to meet this week to reconcile their versions of the budget.

Former Senate President Franklin Drilon on Thursday accused the House of padding its pork barrel by P13.5 billion.

Yesterday, he challenged Malacañang and Congress to waive their pork allocations in the 2008 national budget.

Drilon said this would allow the government to suspend the 12 percent value-added tax (VAT) on oil products without increasing the budget deficit, and at the same time provide relief to consumers faced with rising world oil prices.

"Both Malacañang and Congress should give up their pork barrel," he said, saying the hemp status in the budgets of

MORE TO COME A6

Nobel laureates share words of wisdom

By TJ Burgonio

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM A NOBEL laureate: Your parents' sweat and admiration for you to take school seriously can drive you to excellence.

"I'm happy that your parents presence you. That's the way to go," Aaron Ciechanover quipped to a team in Manila where he and three other Nobel Prize winners in chemistry shared the stage.

The awards elicited chuckles from the audience of academicians and students, and Ciechanover proceeded to drive home the point in the course of replying to a question on whether parental pressures on children to excel in school affect their creativity. Fighting off pressure is part of the spice of modern life.

He added: "You have to challenge your parents in a polite way. I think that the source of ambition, and enlarging what you're hearing, not taking anything for granted, is the key to success."

In his autobiography, Ciechanover recalled that as a child, he received "strong encouragement" from his father to study.

"My parents made sure we received an excellent general education," said the scientist who was born in Haifa, Israel, in October 1947.

Ciechanover and his colleagues, Yuan T. Lee, Hoyte Herbert and Harland

MORE, A6

Trouble with hello, Koko, is it's not yet goodbye, Migz

By Norman Bordadora and Dona Pazzibugan

SO IS IT STILL HOKO-KOKO AHH goodbye Migz? Not quite.

Lawyer Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III said yesterday the recount of votes in the Senate Electoral Tribunal is contentious with his election protest now has him leading by 12,000 votes over Sen. Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri.

TROUBLED A6

Yuppie climbers trek for mountain kids

By Tara Quimbo-Isada in Manila and Vincent Cabreza in Northern Luzon

OFFICE MOUNTAINEERS TURNED A weekend hobby into a mission and trekked for a cause to a remote village in Benguet, where children have never seen spaghetti and mobile phones have little or no reception.

Brought together by their love for adventure and a desire to help, the group of young professionals, mostly from Manila, organized a relief activity called TREK, or Trails to Empower Kids.

Last month, they hiked for hours to reach Sitio Sapbuan, Barangay Tikman-An in Itogon town to hand out bulky backpacks, school supplies, slippers and toys to children.

"It started when we were talking over drinks and Kelly Amorin, TREK's coordinator, said that on her birthday (Dec. 11), she wanted to go to an orphanage and treat [the children]. Eventually, we thought of helping children we'd seen in remote places we'd climbed," said lawyer Jojo Serrano, 35.

"Because of the isolation of the village, they do not get the usual things that children get, like books. And since we go to these far-away places, we figured, why not bring them what they

TOPPLE A6

2007 THE YEAR IN PICTURES: Defining moments, tragedies, farces and a fistful of triumphs

ARE stories better told when photographed? Certainly. Often a picture will say all that needs to be said. These are the images that captured the emotions, the woes, the defeats, the hopes and fears and the victories that defined the year that was.

WHAT'S INSIDE

JOB MARKET
Build your future with us

NEWS/A18
'Mr. Biebuel,' Sen. Migz Zubiri tells Read-Along kids what it is all about

SUNDAY BIZ/B1
A priest's good deed 29 years ago is now the dominant financial agency of farmers, fisherfolk in Hinunangan, Southern Leyte

ENTERTAINMENT/B1
Akward Moments during Meg's birthday show; Josh Groban set to do more shows here, and Charice may return to the Ellen DeGeneres TV show.

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Case closed, says PNP of mall blast

Ayala Land welcome to question findings in court–Barias

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **GAP BETWEEN** rich and poor widening–survey /A4

■ **NBI SUMMONS** 5 men accused of beating Bunevacz /A7

By Alexis Papa

FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF ITS FINAL REPORT concluding that the Glorietta 2 blast was caused by an accidental gas explosion, the Philippine National Police (PNP) yesterday closed the case on the Oct. 19 tragedy that killed 11 people and injured 108.

"The case is now closed. We have submitted all evidence to the Department of Justice so it's now up to the courts to dispense justice," said Director Geary Barias, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO).

To those who continue to doubt the police findings, Barias stressed that the PNP had "sufficiently" explained in its final report that the cause of the explosion was an electrical source igniting the accumulation of toxic gases in the mall's basement.

"That report is sufficient. We used scientific, forensic evidence and we even have testimonial evidence," Barias said in a phone interview.

As for the mall owner Ayala Land Inc. (ALI), Geary said that if it wants to question the police findings, the company was welcome to do so in court.

In its final report on the blast, which it released on Thursday, the PNP ruled out terrorism, saying that methane had accumulated in the basement when the sewage system of the mall failed.

Among evidence presented were laboratory tests which showed traces of methane and carbonoxide of substances who said they detected a foul odor coming from the basement.

The PNP also stressed that no bomb parts and bomb residues were found in the area of the blast, key elements to symbolic that a bomb had caused the explosion. It also said their probbing investigators found no "tearing effect" and blackening in the area, signs that would have indicated a bomb had exploded.

But Ayala Land, the mall owner, refuted the PNP's findings and promised that the PNP report had ignored two studies it had submitted pertaining to a bomb explosion.

The company has also questioned the authenticity of the testimony of the basement and that there was no accumulation of methane.

Charges were filed on Friday against 15 respondents, mostly engineers and maintenance personnel responsible for maintaining the basements.

Yesterday Supt. Francisco Jandilan, chief of the Investigation Unit, Arson Task Force (ATF) took members of the media on a tour of the mall basement.

"The notice is there, it speaks for itself. That is it, as far as we are concerned," he said as protests after the tour.

Jandilan, a veteran arson investigator who was one of the first to enter the basement after the explosion, also dismissed rumors and suspicions that there was a bomb planted in the basement that was being hidden by authorities.

"You saw the area for yourself. Isn't there a cover? There was none. All the physical evidence, plus the forensic evidence points to an explosion fuelled by a gas mixture," he said.

"If someone says the room was high explosives, where is the evidence?"

Jandilan also said he did not see Malaysian expert Abu Ling who was hired by ALI to investigate the blast. With Michael Lim Ubac and Julie M. Aurelio

JOIN THE PUBLIC AUCTION OF

AUCTION BY MALINTA

Auction Dates:
Jan. 16 - 19, 2008
STARTS AT 8:30 A.M. SHARP

Inspection Dates:
Jan. 10 - 15, 2008
STARTS AT 8:30 A.M. SHARP

TRUCKS | HEAVY EQUIPMENT | MISC. ITEMS

Trucks & Equipment Financing available thru:
ORIX METRO Leasing & Finance Corp. • Tel (02) 888-8888

DOJ: Uncovered plot led to media restraint

By Jerome Aning

AUTHORITIES CLAIM UNCOVERED A NEW plot to destabilize the Arroyo administration, just days this month, that is why the media was ordered to withhold criminal prosecution if it interfered anew in legitimate police and military operations.

"I understand that on Jan. 22 there will be a mass action that will take place to oust the [administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.]

"We're just preparing for the possibility that supporting like what happened in the Manila Pen or Oakwood may take place again," Justice Raul Gonzalez told reporters yesterday.

The DOJ issued the warning after receiving intelligence reports of a fresh plot to destabilize the government during the anniversary of the Edsa II People Power revolt.

In a radio interview over government-owned dzRB, Gonzalez said that while he knew of a report on a "mass action" taking place on Jan. 22, the government did not exactly know how it would come about.

Gonzalez did not identify the leader of the group behind the new plot, saying he got the information about the supposed mass action from the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (NICA).

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, the police and the military have earlier warned of both destabilization moves being hatched by the Magdalo group of renegade soldiers.

Some Magdalo officers and soldiers are still at large.

In a media advisory on Friday, Gonzalez said media could "stay near criminal liabilities under the law if anyone of your field reporters, news gatherers, photographers, cameramen and other media practitioners disobey lawful orders from duly authorized government officers and personnel during emergencies."

He explained that such situations "may lead to collateral damage in properties and civilian casualties in case of unchecked public behavior during emergencies."

"We're trying to avoid that. If people don't want to follow that, they do so on their own risk, but government will also invoke the provisions of the law opening charges of obstruction of justice," he said.

Gonzalez warned members of the media would be arrested if they disobeyed orders to clear the areas that are targets of police and military operations.

He said that if media men insist on staying on, they should wear helmets like government if they get killed in bust.

In a statement, the National Press Club of the Philippines said the DOJ media advisory was troubled by.

It abridges press freedom, sends a "chilling effect" to journalists and is effectively a prior restraint to freedom of expression, the NPC said in a statement.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) said the DOJ warning was "a clear and shameless attempt to criminalize the exercise of press freedom and a clear case of prior restraint."

It called on all journalistic and media organizations to defy Gonzalez.

A Malacañang official, however, defended the DOJ media advisory saying it was just a "reminder."

"As far as I'm concerned, if the media people really insist on staying or somewhat being a possible gun battle, they should not blame government if they are hurt in the process. Because the 18th persons once shot it's not the government's will happen, they will blame the government," Presidential Management Staff chief Cerge Remonde said.

Remonde said the media advisory was a preemptive move in anticipation of planned mass actions coinciding with this year's celebrations of Edsa II.

"We have no advice there [media] that the will positively happen. We do not know what's going to happen on Jan. 22 if the reports are true that there will mass actions coming from all over Luzon."

Gonzalez said he expected to be criticized, adding that he recently put into writing what Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno verbally announced during a meeting with media men following the June 29 Manila Peninsula standoff.

Several journalists covering the Manila Peninsula were arrested after defying orders to leave the premises as policemen and soldiers stormed the hotel. With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Julie M. Aurelio and AFP

FREE PLANE TICKETS
ROUNDTRIP TO BORACAY

INCLUSIONS:
- FREE Roundtrip Plane Tickets
- 2Nights / 3Days Vacation
- Breakfast Meals
- Complete Kitchen Set
- VIP Island Transfers
- VIP Cabin Villa
- TAXES AND SURCHARGES (No Hidden Fees)

LOWEST-BEST PEAK-SEASON RATE

ALL FOR ONLY 6899 PER PERSON

TXT AND H.E. CALL YOU!

LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE
PROMO ENDS: JANUARY 31, 2008

TRAVEL PERIOD: FEBRUARY 2008

Sheridan Villas BORACAY ISLAND

RP Everest team expresses regret

BACOLOD CITY—THE PHILIPPINE MT. Everest Expedition 2006 and 2007 teams have conveyed their condolences to the family of New Zealand's Sir Edmund Hillary who became the first person to conquer Mt. Everest. Hillary died on Friday at the age of 88.

"Our country's successful quests to climb Mount Everest twice were made by pioneering exploits of Sir Edmund," said the letter of condolence signed by Philippine expedition leader Art Alcantara, a copy of which was furnished the Inquirer yesterday.

"Today we learned he is gone. Indeed, people everywhere are saddened with the passing of Sir Edmund Hillary who left us for a place higher than Mount Everest," Wylie said.

Cecile P. Corros, Inquirer Visayas

Convergys Makati Party
December 17, 2007
The Palace, Makati

Convergys Cebu Party
December 14, 2007
Mactan Island, Cebu

Convergys Cagayan Party
December 17, 2007
Corinthian Plaza Hotel, Cagayan

THE COUNTRY'S BEST DESERVES THE COUNTRY'S BEST

Only the biggest artists play at our parties.
WHO PLAYED AT YOURS?

Convergys Cebu Party
December 14, 2007
Mactan Island Hotel, Cebu

Convergys Commonwealth Party
December 17, 2007
Silver City, Tiendesitas, Pasig

5555 CVG (284)

CONVERGYS
Outthinking Outdoing

WASTONG PAGKAIN, ABOT-KAYANG BILHIN

Bigas		Bigas	
NFA Rice	P18.25	Rice Premium	P27-36
		Rice Fancy	P30-45
Bangus		Bangus	P70-90
Tilapia		Tilapia	P80-90
Galunggong		Galunggong	P90-120
Kamatis		Kamatis	P25-50
Pechay		Pechay	P18-40
Sitaw		Sitaw	P45-60
Talong		Talong	P30-50
Asukal		Asukal	
Regular Well Milled:	P19-26		
Well Milled Rice	P21-32		

Presyo sa piling Bonggay Food Terminal at Triadtian Apdo.

Presyo sa mga Market at sa Piyato Dos Premium Zamboanga del Norte, Bukidnon Mindanao, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Mountain Province, Lower del Norte, Cotabato Norte, Davao del Norte, Zamboanga Sibugay

dti

NUTRI-TIP: Limitahan ng tamang dami ng fluids ang iyong anak. HOTLINE: 0925-4438014

Survey: Rich-poor gap widens

THE GAP BETWEEN THE RICH AND the poor in the Philippines is widening, with the richest 10 percent of families taking in more than a third of the country's total income, according to government data released yesterday.

The richest 1.74 million families earned 36 percent of the total 2006 family income of just over P3 trillion, the National Statistics Office said in a statement.

The data placed the average family income at about P5001a day for a family of four, with few families having any savings.

It said the survey indicated "a downward trend in the poverty incidence in rural disparity among families" as suggested by the Gini coefficient, a global standard on measuring income equality versus a population.

Many Filipinos are poor because the country's wealth has always been controlled by a few greedy, rich families, according to Supreme Court Associate Reynato Puno.

Speaking on Thursday before the Philippine Bible Society during the launch of National Bible Week (Jan. 23 to 27), Puno explained "why very few Filipinos are enjoying the so-called good life."

Social action

"The root cause of this problem is well-known. It is the relentless greed of a few families who, from the beginning of time, have always controlled the wealth of our country," he said.

"These families have perpetuated their stranglehold on our country's wealth, dynasty after dynasty. There is no end to their greed, no border to their possessions," he added.

Puno said the Greek philosopher Socrates was correct in saying that ultimately what makes a country poor is not its lack of natural resources but the greed of its few rich citizens.

"This cannot be denied in our society. We abound in natural resources, our seas are abundant with fishes, our mountains are full of precious metals, our people are filled with talent. Sir, we are poor," he said.

But Puno said the problem could be corrected through "social action," and went on to cite biblical passages concerning how riches are gained at the loss of one's immortal soul.

He said social action should be instigated by Jesus Christ, "the greatest social activist for justice of all of time, for He never wearied in championing the cause of the oppressed, especially in denouncing the injustices of the poor and thoughtlessness of the rich."

AP with Artemio Dumlao

Calixtro Review Center

PASS NCLEX-RN EXAM

NCLEX-RN Review
Test Taking Strategies

Prof. Fred Calixtro, MSN, RN, CLNC
Professor, Linfield School of Nursing
Staff RN, St. Vincent Hospital
Portland, Oregon, USA

Date: Sec. A January 19, 20, 26, & 27, 2008	**(8am-5pm)**
Sec. B January 21, 22, 23, 24, & 25, 2008	**(8am-5pm)**
Sec. C March 26, 28, 29, 27 & 28, 2008	**(8am-5pm)**
Sec. D June 14, 15, 21, & 22, 2008	**(8am-5pm)**
Sec. E June 16, 17, 18, 19, & 20, 2008	**(8am-5pm)**

Classes held at Sulo Hotel, Q. C

Fee: P5000
Registration: January 17 & 18, 2008 in Sulo Hotel at 12pm-5pm

Reservation fee: P 500
E-mail: lindcalixtro@pol.com Phone : (0921) 993-4212
Website: www.calixtroreviewlling.net
Or look for Mrs. Alegria Calixtro (02) 9387268

RP marks autism-consciousness week

THE NATION MARKS FOR THE 12th straight year National Autism Consciousness Week on Jan. 20-26 with the theme "Hugot Akademiko sa Individuals with Autism," under the auspices of Autism Society Philippines (ASP) in partnership with the National Council for the Welfare of Disabled Persons (NCWDP) and other government agencies.

It is proto reform, the organizers said the theme was adopted to mitigate the feelings of despair and resignation of families affected by autism, and to serve as a driving force for individuals and institutions involved with families affected by the condition to work, collaborate with and support each other.

Create a caring environment

The observance of Autism Consciousness Week is mandated by Proclamation 711 issued by then President Fidel V. Ramos on Jan. 6, 1998, to create public awareness about autism as a disability and to promote a supportive and caring environment to enable persons with the condition to live with dignity and provide them to function independently and make contributions to society.

Autism or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is an impairment in developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. It affects how an individual interprets what he sees, hears and touches, thereby impairing understanding, language and adaptation to the environment.

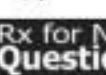
The celebration will be highlighted by, among other activities, a walk for a cause for persons with autism; an on-the-spot art contest; lectures and forums on autism; family support group counseling, educational trips to centers catering to persons with autism, and free therapy under the auspices of government and nongovernment organizations led by the NCWDP and Hill Council for the Welfare of Children, House of Representatives, departments of education, environment and natural resources, social welfare and development, transportation and communications, and the interior and local government, Philippine Information Agency, among others.

Buy Maxtor External Retail Drives* from participating dealers and get a chance to win:

*Participating products: Maxtor OT4 and Maxtor Basics Jade.

See posters and flyers for details.
Promo period is from January 14, 2008 to April 14, 2008
www.storage.com.ph

Participating Dealers:
Vilman Computer Systems Tel. No.: 429-1006 to 09 • **Complink Marketing** Tel. No.: 687-1234/687-3190 • **Compex** Tel. No.: 721-0268 • **PC Chain** Tel. No.: 376-3296 • **Infoworx** Tel. No.: 413-3838 • **PC Express** Tel. No.: 725-8668 **Octagon** 635-9161 / 631-6945 /6671705 • **PC Quarter** Tel. No.: 721-1051 **PC Corner** Tel. No.: 723-2837 /39 • **PC Option** Tel. No.: 723-0190 • **PC Boy** Tel. No.: 736-0732 • **Enigma (Angeles)** Tel. No. (045)888-1594 • **Concept (Ilo-Ilo)** Tel. No. (033) 337-7221 | 335-0753 | 337-8476 • **B & J Computer and Electronic Services (Cebu)** Tel. No.: (038) 411-4193/501-9531



Rx for NCLEX® Success
Question Review Bank
The **ONLY NCLEX®-RN** test preparation program developed in partnership with the National League for Nursing.

NEWGATE NLN

The KEY to passing the NCLEX®-RN Exam!
- NLN NCLEX® Online Diagnostic Readiness Test
- 4,200+ NCLEX® exam-style practice questions in QRB
  - Receive immediate feedback and rationales to test questions
  - Receive performance reports after each session
  - Custom settings available for NCLEX® exam-style simulation
- Four months access — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

7064QRB (7064772) www.newgate.com.ph

WHERE ARE THE BALLOTS? A staffer at the Sanga-Sanga Electoral Tribunal sits in front of the ballot box, one of 198 found empty from Sultan Kudarat, Shariff Kabunsuan provinces. The recount of votes in the electoral protests of Koko started on Jan. 8. JANSEN ROMERO

Trouble with ...

From page A1

Pimentel made the statement after canvass from his camp and Zubiri's found all 198 ballot boxes from Sultan Kudarat, Shariff Kabunsuan, empty.

Zubiri led Pimentel in the municipality by 12,000 votes.

"The recount of the votes in Sultan Kudarat shows the result to be zero-zero. There were no ballots to count," said Pimentel, the son of Sen. Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr.

"In the national level he leads me by 140,000. Without his 21,000 votes from Sultan Kudarat, I now lead him by 121,000," he added.

Zubiri and Pimentel contested the 12th slot in the 2004 senatorial race.

Zubiri edged out Pimentel in the latter part of the national canvass when the votes from Maguindanao started coming in.

Back to the ballots

According to Pimentel, the essence of a recount is to go back to the ballots. Without ballots to count, the counts will be zero for all candidates.

He said even if Zubiri's camp would decide to go to the next election document, which is the statement of votes for Sultan Kudarat, it would still be questionable.

"The statement of votes are typewritten—(the) first time in the history of elections in the Philippines. It is highly irregular," Pimentel said.

Pimentel said the empty ballot boxes from a town that Zubiri dominated would no longer be subject to an objection because there's nothing to object to. There were no documents, no tally boards, no statistics of votes.

"Our objections from the other areas such as those where the ballots were clearly manufactured would only add to (my lead if they are accepted by the tribunal)," Pimentel said.

Metal seals

Zubiri on Friday said he didn't have anything to do with the empty ballot boxes. He said the conflict in Maguindanao would have had something to do with the empty boxes.

"The boxes still had metal seals when they were opened by the revisors," Pimentel said expressing doubt that the election documents had been stolen.

Pimentel's lawyer Leila de Lima said on Friday that the empty ballot boxes prove that no elections were held in the municipalities and other places in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Shariff Kabunsuan province is part of the ARMM.

"Or if there had been an election, the documents were taken out as they would not coincide with the votes as canvassed," De Lima said.

Zubiri's moves

Meanwhile, Zubiri's camp said they would contest the exclusion of votes from Sultan Kudarat. Shariff Kabunsuan.

"It doesn't mean that the results (from Sultan Kudarat) should be excluded. We can't allow that, otherwise we will disenfranchise the voters. We will resort to other documents to find out the votes," Zubiri's counsel, George Garcia, said yesterday.

He said the Supreme Court has ruled in the case of Lerias v. House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal that in cases where the certificates of canvassing, the parliamentary may utilize available election documents, such as the precinct election results (ERs) or the municipal statement of votes (SOVs).

But since the ERs were supposed to be inside the ballot boxes that turned out to be empty, Garcia said they would ask for the copies held by the Commission on Elections (Comelec), the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) and the political parties.

Long way to go

"Regardless of what happened in Sultan Kudarat, we should proceed with the revisions. Hindi (sana manalo)ggad na sa pamayan. Mahaba pa to. (It's not true Zubiri would be ousted) from office. We have a long way to go," Garcia said in a phone interview.

He said they would also file a motion with the Senate Electoral Tribunal to investigate what happened to the Sultan Kudarat votes.

"We will not be benefited by the loss of those ballots. In fact we were prejudiced," he said, pointing out that the official tally showed that Zubiri led Pimentel there by 53,000 votes.

In the final Comelec tally, Zubiri only edged Pimentel by about 10,000 votes after votes from the ARMM were counted.

While Pimentel formed his election protest on the 198 votes, Zubiri has also filed a counter-protest against Pimentel that included other provinces outside the ARMM.

Other precincts

Zubiri's lawyer also said that before the discovery of the empty Sultan Kudarat ballot boxes, the parties had already opened ballot boxes from five municipalities in Maguindanao, another ARMM province, and had begun the revision, or the vote recount.

"At least the presence of the ballot boxes is the fact that there was an election in Maguindanao," Garcia said.

He added that while the investigation of the Sultan Kudarat ballot boxes was pending, they should move on to the other contested precincts and municipalities.

The vote revision began on Jan. 8.

Garcia said after the ballot boxes from 29 percent of Pimentel's contested precincts have been opened, the HET would hear arguments from both sides on whether to continue the recount.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, January 13, 2008
Right Side of the Lord

1st Reading: Is 42:1-4,6-7

Thus says the Lord,

"Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight.

I have put my spirit upon him, and he will bring justice to the nations.

He does not cheer or raise his voice, proclamation are not heard in the streets.

A bruised reed he will not break, and a wick still smoldering he will not quench,

He will truly bring forth justice.

He will not waver or be broken until he has established justice on earth; the islands are waiting for his law.

I, Yahweh, have called you for the sake of justice; I will hold your hand to make you firm; I will make you a sign covenant to the people, and a light to the nations, to open eyes that do not see, to free captives from prison, to bring out of light those who sit in darkness.

2nd Reading: Acts 10:34-38

Peter then spoke to the men, "Truly I realize that God does not show partiality, but in all nations he listens to everyone who fears God and does good. And this is the message he has sent to the people of Israel, the good news of peace he has proclaimed through Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of all. No doubt you have heard of the event that occurred throughout the whole country of the Jews, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism John preached: You know how God anointed Jesus the Nazarene with the holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all who were under the devil's power, because God was with him."

Gospel: Mt 3:13-17

At that time Jesus arrived from Galilee and came to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. But John would have prevented him, and said, "It is I who need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied and said to him, "Allow it for now; for so it is proper for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed him.

When Jesus was baptized, he came up from the water. At once the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God come down like a dove and light upon him. And a voice from the heavens said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Commentary

For 30 years Jesus lives simply in the quiet village of Nazareth, all the while preparing a public ministry that begins when he enters the waters of the Jordan River to be baptized by John the Baptist. Jesus' motive for this act of humility is not entirely clear. Although he did not need to be baptized, Jesus associates himself with the message of John the Baptist, "Make your lives, the Kingdom of God is at hand."

At the Jordan River Jesus inaugurates a new way of life, the life that was and Mary entered through the Sacrament of Baptism. May our keeping of the feast of the Baptism of the Lord keep us faithful to following Jesus, who alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Clarion Publishing Inc., Editorial Jr., 2/F 60 Sgt. Esmero St., Guadalupe Viejo, 1211 Makati City, Philippines, 1211 Quezon City, tel. 815-9999, fax. 815-9999, E-mail: info@clarion.ph, Website: http://www.bible.ph, Philippine Bible Society, Inc., Editorial Office, 1211 Quezon City, Philippines, Publication is http://www.clarion.ph/publication.html, Bible Society in the Philippines

Rewaaaards mo, BRO!
Enjoy loads of rewards from now up to March 31, 2008!
INFORMATION
SMART BRO
Ain't it great to be a Smart BRO subscriber! Now you can enjoy all your rewards from now until the end of March! With over 30 outlets offering you great discounts and freebies, there's no reason why you shouldn't enjoy them all.
MONT BLANC
ESCADA
CAROLINA HERRERA
Just present your Smart BRO rewards coupon at participating establishments to avail of the offer.
• Up to 7x faster than dial-up • No phone line needed
• Nationwide coverage*
Not yet a BRO subscriber? Be one now!
SMART BROADBAND INC.
SMART
THE POWER TO LEAD

GMA's hawk mentality blocking peace talks – Joma

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo's "irrational" hawk mentality that aims to crush the communist insurgency with military force has prevented the resumption of peace negotiations, exiled Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) founder Jose Ma. Sison said Saturday.

"The Arroyo regime is irrationally obsessed with the futile ambition to destroy the armed revolutionary military force. Thus, it continues to ignore proposals for the resumption of the formal talks in the peace negotiations or even for informal exploratory talks to prepare for the resumption of formal talks," Sison said in an e-mailed statement from his base in Utrecht, the Netherlands, a copy of which was handed to the Inquirer.

Sison said it would be "important in order to advance the national-democratic revolution [and] save seventy thousand lives."

Peace talks with the communists, brokered by Norway, have been stalled since August 2004 after Malacañang refused to try and persuade the United States and some Western European states to remove the CPP and New People's Army (NPA), the CPP's armed wing, from their lists of terrorist organizations.

In a recently released accomplishment report, the Armed Forces of the Philippines said it dismantled 33 guerrilla fronts in 2007 and would dismantle 17 more by the first quarter of this year.

In a statement sent to the Inquirer on Wednesday, CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal lashed the military report.

"Not a single guerrilla front has been dismantled. Several municipalities of opposition launched by the AFP has proven miserably failed to defeat the revolutionary armed forces," he said.

"The CPP said the number of NPA guerrilla fronts has been fluctuating between 130 and 136.

Rosal challenged AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. to identify the areas where the supposed rebel guerrilla fronts had been wiped out, "so that the people can independently judge the real score."

Sison said the CPP had been providing guidelines to military rebellion and training in thousands of cadres and guerrilla commanders for the accelerated expansion, consolidation and development of the NPA regional and provincial commands.

He said the rebel forces aim to increase the number of guerrilla fronts in order to cover all the 173 congressional districts in the provinces, allow the armed city partisans to operate in 61 congressional districts in the cities, and form and train million units in villages and self-defense units in mass organizations.

He said the NPA was intensifying its nationwide tactical offensives in order to seize more arms and resources from government forces. With Jerome Aning

After attack, gov't tells mines to hike security

KIDAPAWAN, COMPOSTELA, RAMS have been advised by the government to beef up their security after communist guerrillas submerged a major copper project of global mining giant Xstrata on New Bataan's Boy, according to a mining group.

Sina Peoples Army (NPA) rebels are fire to the Xstrata base camp at its Tampakan exploration project in South Cotabato and around to launch a similar action against other foreign-run mines in the future.

"While believed amid the untidy wings-type security situation, nationwide, the raid evidently wants to derail the government's revitalization program for the Philippine minerals industry," the Minerals Development Council said in a statement yesterday.

The council said "companies will be advised to periodically consult home with the national police and military forces to strengthen security coordination and implementation."

The council, made up of key senior advisers of President Macapagal-Arroyo and senior executives of the country's mining industries, helps the government craft policy to develop the country's long-underfunded minerals sector.

"The biggest losers will be the communities and workers whom the communist group claims to protect," the council said in light of the Jan. 11 attack.

"The raid is a serious affront to the will of communities supportive of the exploration project in their desire to improve their quality of life."

Environment Secretary Lito Atienza has since called for more security for the Xstrata project as well as other mining sites across the country.

He urged the military to provide more security for the mine industries projects.

The NPA's earlier organization, the Communist Party of the Philippines, which has been waging a 39-year Marxist rebellion, has claimed responsibility for the Xstrata attack and vowed it would "wage the Armyscope-vulgaris campaign to oustfest off the country's natural resources to big foreign capitalists."

In related news, communist guerrillas clashed with security forces and attacked a telecommunications tower in separate incidents, burning at least two rebels dead, the military said yesterday.

A military patrol fought with NPA rebels near a town east of Manila yesterday, leaving two rebels dead and a third critically wounded, military spokesperson said.

Also yesterday, soldiers clashed with suspected NPA guerrillas in Compostela Valley province, police and military officials said.

Troops from the Army's 28th Infantry Battalion came across 14 heavily-armed guerrillas believed to be members of the NPA's Front 3 under a Ka Norman in Sitio Lumang, Barangay Banlag, Compostela Valley police chief Supt. Ronald dela Rosa said. AFP with a report from Princess Lira, Inquirer Mindanao

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS
España, Manila
FACULTY OF CIVIL LAW
2008 LAW ENTRANCE EXAMINATION (LEE)

The applicant must have earned a Bachelor of Arts or Sciences degree, or a candidate for graduation for such degree by March 2008, and must have earned the required units in English, Social Sciences and Mathematics.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. College Transcript of Scholastic Records. However, if the applicant is graduating in March 2008, an official copy of the temporary transcript containing college records from first year up to the first semester of the fourth should be submitted instead.

2. Two Passport size pictures.

3. Two Certificates of Good Moral Character with the school seal.

a. For UST graduates, one of the certificates should come from the Office for Student Affairs (OSA) and one from the Dean of the previous college.

b. For non-UST graduates, one from the Guidance Office or its equivalent and one from the Dean of the previous college.

c. Applicants who are working must submit an additional Certificate of Good Moral Character issued by the current employer.

4. Application and Testing fee; and

5. Duly accomplished application forms. The forms will be issued by the UST Faculty of Civil Law Dean's Office only upon submission of ALL THE REQUIREMENTS.

NOTE: ALL requirements must be submitted one week before the examination day.

APPLICATION SCHEDULE: Starts January 14, 2008
Monday to Friday, 9:00 am-12:00 nn; 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

EXAMINATION SCHEDULES: 8:00 am- 12:00 nn
February 22, 2008, March 28, 2008, April 18, 2008 and May 9, 2008.

VENUE OF EXAMINATION: Reading Room, Faculty of Civil Law, Ground Floor, UST Main Building.

FOR INQUIRIES: Visit the Dean's Office or log in the UST Website at www.ust.edu.ph, click on Academics or call 731-4027 or 7311601 local 8235.

Local execs blame solons for falling share of taxes

By Michael Lim Ubac

WHILE CONGRESSMEN AND senators quarrel over their "pork barrel" allowances, local government chief executives are up in arms over the slash in their Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) this year.

Mayors led by the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) have blamed congressmen for their shrinking IRA, pointing to the lawmakers' penchant for carving out laws other—even if they do not meet the income and population requirements for cityhood.

The IRA is the share of provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays from national tax collections.

The expanding number of cities means there will be more local government units sharing the budgetary pie, said Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, who has begun drilling out the local government allocations.

The league has filed a case with the Supreme Court, questioning the qualifications of the new cities and praying for an injunction.

While the case is pending, the department cannot release the IRA, said Andaya. "If we wait for a TRO (temporary restraining order) from the high court, the salaries of 3.02 employees will be delayed," said Andaya, "so we had to make releases early last week."

As of Sept. 30, 2007, the country had 17 regions, 81 provinces, 136 cities, 1,494 municipalities and 41,995 barangays.

For 2008, the IRA is P211.7 billion.

Andaya said the Department of Budget and Management had to follow the law in distributing the local government's IRA, which is 40 percent of the national internal revenue allotment.

But, from an average increase of around 17 to 18 percent yearly, the average increase for LGUs this year is only 5 percent, after deducting the IRA of the 16 new cities, Andaya said.

"The IRA share of all the cities has decreased," continued the budget chief.

But one's bad fortune is another's good luck.

The 16 new cities will dramatically increase their IRA share from 153 to 280 percent compared to their previous IRA as municipalities, according to Andaya.

Take the case of Marikina City, the capital of Marikina province.

Before it became a city in September 2006, the municipality received P62 million as a first-class town. Its IRA increased three-fold when it was declared a city.

Machine-readable passport app'ts allowed via Internet

By Cynthia D. Balana

STARTING MONDAY, APPLICANTS FOR Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) can make an appointment with the Department of Foreign Affairs through the Internet.

DFA spokesperson Usec Crisostomo said the DFA launched the Passport Appointment System by Internet to address the influx of applicants who wish to travel abroad.

Initially, the system will be limited to applicants whose passports had already expired or would be expiring within one year, and to senior citizens or those aged 60 and above.

Crisostomo said the system would later be expanded to cover all passport applicants.

Qualified applicants may avail of the appointment system by sending their request via Internet to appointment@dfa.gov.ph.

Applicants must provide the following information: Full name (first name, middle name and surname), date of birth, place of birth, and latest passport number and date of issuance.

Crisostomo said an application must be made one week before the proposed date of appointment.

Applicants must wait for confirmation of the proposed appointment and take note of the reference number that will be provided by the DFA Passport Office before proceeding to the DFA for the filing of the application.

Once the appointment has been set, the applicant must be at the DFA Passport Office (Special Area for those with appointments) on the confirmed designated date and time for the filing of the passport application.

Crisostomo said that with the appointment system, applicants will skip the first step of the process which is the verification of their documents. They will now proceed to step 2, which is pre-processing, and step 3, which is encoding and payment.

Crisostomo said the DFA would set up call centers to handle the increase in daily appointment transactions by Internet.

NBI summons 5 accused of manhandling Bunevacz

By Tina G. Santos

THE NATIONAL BUREAU of Investigation has subpoenaed five persons accused of manhandling former detainee David Bunevacz in November last year.

Summoned to appear before the NBI Bunevacz were Ty. Jesse Ong, Cedric Lee, Louie Kiat, Chito Yu and Domingo Ayuste, all of West Greenhills, San Juan, reported Bunevacz's business partners.

Lawyer Sixto Brillantes Jr., chief of the Anti-Kidnapping, Hijacking and Armed Robbery Division, said, "We're testing their to find light on the matter. We've already heard David's side, we have to hear the other side of the story as well."

Bunevacz, former president of Beverly Hills 6750 Cosmetic Surgery and Skin Institute, a high-end beauty clinic on Ortigas Avenue, Makati City, filed with the NBI last month a complaint of physical injuries against his business associates, whom he accused of manhandling him.

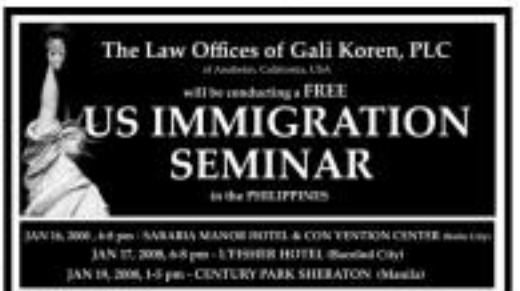
Bunevacz alleged that his partners also forcibly took his Porsche, an expensive watch and his cellphone.

The management of the aesthetic clinic has accused Bunevacz of misusing the firm's funds amounting to millions of pesos.

According to Dr. Eduardo Gaston, president of the Beverly Hills clinic, their lawyers had sent a letter demanding that Bunevacz explain alleged questionable transactions where he was disbursement.

UPCAT results

THE RESULTS of the University of the Philippines' College Admission Test (UPCAT) are now posted at the Office of Admissions in UP Diliman and at www.up.edu.ph.



204 passers out of 236 takers for the June Nursing Board Exam
2nd semester starts on Nov. 19, 2007

ROBBY MORPHED INTO A MISSION Young mountaineers call their program "TREK" or Trails to Empower Kids. TREK helps poor children in Sitio Sapluan, two hours away by foot from Kiagan, Benguet. (STANLEY CAYETANO)

Yuppie climbers trek ...

First page A1

sured," Navarro told the Inquirer.

The idea came around September last year, when climbers from different mountaineering groups started coming together after frequent encounters on weekend training climbs for a trek on Mt. Apo in Davao, the country's tallest peak.

Climbers from Gold Mountaineers (Society of Adventurers, Bringing Innovation To all Mountaineers), Geomountaineers and the Ilis Ancon Outdoor Club signed up to turn the trip to Davao into a climb-up Mt. Ugo in Benguet on Nov. 1-3 that led the group to the place they were looking for: Sitio Sapluan, a village of around 200 residents some two hours away by foot from the Ibogan town proper.

Former mining hub

It was Tinongdan barangay chair, Norberto Pacis, who recommended the remote community.

Ibogan once in Benguet used to be the hub of Philippine mining for almost a century. Pacis told the hayonas.

Barangay Tinongdan, to particular, is nestled between the mining communities that sprouted around the mine site of Benguet Corp., the first Philippine mine, and the Agno River, the country's resulting the Benguet hydroelectric power plant. But this village of Balisi, Inab and Balangaoan has never received the kind of progress one would expect from these two economic engines, Pacis said.

The 3,000 residents of the Tinongdan—who farm and incidentally pan for gold—are scattered around 12,726 hectares.

Got attention via a mountain

The village was not among the host barangays that benefited from the tax shares of Benguet Corp., Pacis said, but it would receive up to P2 million yearly from proceeds of Ibogo Pass whose operations began drawing down due to wear and tear.

A dead zone the client's ownership that lasted for almost 10 years also proved to be a disaster for the community, until Benguet was finally auctioned off in November to the Alsons Group of companies.

The community has not received even backyard technology, according to Pacis, even when the operations of Benguet Corp. and Ibogo Pass had reached their peak. For instance, the village was energized only in 1995.

"So it was a surprise to us that climbers are hopping mountaineering Mt. Ugo, which is inside our barangay, we finally got attention for our schools/children," Pacis said.

Mt. Ugo, one of the highest mountains in Luzon, is a challenging "practice mountain" for climbing enthusiasts.

"It was through Ugo when visitors began watching our plight," he said.

The school

Pacis told the climbers that the Sapluan Primary School was too far from the village center, "so we in the barangay felt it needed to be on priority among seven elementary schools and two high schools."

Pacis gave Aurora, TREK's coordinator, a wish list that included school notebooks used to urban centers in the country.

Textbooks are highly prized in remote villages, he said.

Pacis related that Sapluan children of all ages go to one classroom provided by one teacher. Classes are often interrupted by parents who need their children to run errands or attend to vegetable plots.

"The barangay captain said the skits had not been watched [by school children], until 27-year-old mountaineer, Shyla Pamenghuan.

Village party, fiesta style

With a plan and a place, the group dared the outreach activity on Dec. 8 and 9, coinciding with the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

It was to be the first fiesta-style lunch party for the village, where Christmases and birthdays were by without celebrations on account of religious abuse of the villagers are Adventists Missions, which consider celebrating such occasions as Christmas).

"At first, we were afraid we would not be able to pull it off because there were 200 people for whom we had to prepare food and we had to gather school supplies for 50 children that with simple test messages and e-mails, we were able to gather more than what we needed," said Aurora.

The still to give on through corporate red tape and big companies discount cash, canned goods, books, boxes of milk, vitamins and toys for the Sapluan children. Friends and friends of friends shelled out P500 to P1,000 for the project.

Carrying boxes of goods for Sapluan kids, the group left Manila for Benguet (through Baguio City) on the evening of Dec. 7. After the six-hour bus ride to Baguio, the group took a two-hour jeepney ride to Ibogan, except for Aurora and Pamenghuan who had to buy kilos of vegetables, fish and meats in the city for the village party.

Long trek

Reaching the village meant walking on rough terrain, negotiating hanging bridges while lugging a load of fresh vegetables, a drum of tilapia, boxes of books, plus their overnight packs and tents.

There was hardly any rest for the pack when they arrived at the sitio: two houses have become the only "tindahan" (sari-sari store) in the village.

Preparing and cooking the next day's meal—chopping fried tilapia, menudo and spaghetti—took the whole night, and the group just had enough time the following day to organize the children for the party.

"We were all underage, we had not taken a bath, and the kids came well-groomed and in their Sunday clothes," said Aurora.

"We were told it was the first time outsiders came to the village and the children were really shy. One even cried when I asked his name," said banker Tony Alburos, another climber.

The program started at 11 a.m. with parlor games, the kind that had never been played in Sapluan.

No TV sets

Music was played over the barrio-karaoke to warm up the audience, but villagers were cold to the hit "Paputok," so old dance tune that gained popularity via a TV game show.

There is not a single TV set in Sapluan.

"We thought the kids would respond to Paputok, but when we played it, they were just staring at us. And when we turned their music back on, country music, they were more responsive," said 27-year-old Jil Cosa.

Lunch had its own revelations. The mountaineers were careful not to go too exotic in preparing the menu, but spaghetti proved to be just that for one boy.

"It was funny the way the boy looked at the spaghetti when he was served. We had to explain to him that children are usually fond of eating spaghetti," said Cosa.

Teary-eyed

To communicate with villagers, the group had someone translate Filipino to Ibaloi.

Despite such barriers, the activity got in going and receiving chains through when it was time for the group to give out their gifts. Smiles and thanks were returned when every school bag, book, mineral, pair of slippers, toy set and vitamin pack was passed to each child.

"When Sylia," the oldest village, stood up to speak, we turned our faces away from the audience because we were getting teary-eyed. She said that in all her years of living in the village, it was the first time such activity was held.

Encouraged by their success, the group is planning a second TREK before the new school year, another adventure to reach out to villagers otherwise cut off from things taken for granted elsewhere.

"We feel that the proper year was meant to happen. Help poured in and we were just there to deliver them to the children," Navarro said.

GMA to veto budget if ...

From page A1

agencies," he said in a phone interview.

Defiant had claimed on Thursday that the House had "savaged" an extra P13.5 billion pork barrel in its version of the 2008 national budget, on top of the P12.2 billion regular pork barrel (Priority Development Assistance Fund or PDAF) allocated to the chamber and in the Senate each year.

This, he had said, was "unbudged" in the budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways, but only an increase of P5.9 billion was reflected in the House version before the rest was moved to the unprogrammed fund.

The pork barrel is used to fund the pet projects of lawmakers and is a known source of kickbacks.

Lagman, chair of the House committee on appropriations, has denied Defiant's accusation.

Offsetting revenue loss

Defiant yesterday pointed out that in the budget, lawmakers were allowed a P9.2 billion PDAF and another P6.2 billion in the DPWH unclear for their projects.

Malacañang's pork barrel comes from lump sum items in the budget, he said.

Defiant, who chaired the Senate finance committee for a year before "graduating" from the chamber in July 2007, said the amount in pork barrel to be disbursed from the budget would offset the loss in revenue resulting from the suspension of the VAT.

For instance, if the VAT on oil were suspended for six months, resulting in a revenue loss of P37 billion, this could be compensated for by the waiving of the pork barrel in the same amount, he said.

"That revenue shortfall can be compensated by the legislators and Malacañang giving up their pork barrel for one year," he said, adding:

"[The pork barrel] should be more than enough to compensate for the loss in revenue from the suspension of VAT on oil so that Juan de la Cruz could be relieved of the burden [brought] by increase in the pump prices of gasoline."

Sen. Manuel Roxas had proposed the suspension of the VAT on oil for six months, which could lead to P20-30 billion in revenue losses. Finance Secretary Margarita Teves had estimated a P54-billion loss from a six-month suspension, according to Defiant.

If the VAT suspension were matched by the waiving of the pork barrel, which is a form of expenditure, the government would maintain the budget deficit, Defiant said.

Besides, he said, reducing the pork barrel of Malacañang and Congress would not affect the "services of agencies."

Realignments

Lagman had denied the purported "transfers" and said the bulk of the P13.5 billion was composed of realignments from the DPWH.

"First of all, the increase in the pork barrel amounted to only P5.9 billion, which came from cuts from other departments, he had said.

For instance, he had said, some P8.3 billion was realigned from the slow-moving foreign-assisted projects in the DPWH to avoid "unutilization" the fund.

Andaya, however, pointed out that the House panel in effect increased the Arroyo's proposed budget by P8.3 billion.

He said the unutilized government funds could mean a budgetary deficit of P5.3 billion in 2008 if Malacañang went along with Lagman's explanation.

He urged the House leadership to adhere to the constitutional provision barring Congress from increasing the treasury of the President's proposed yearly budget.

"From the standpoint of the Department of Budget and Management, we recognize the power of Congress to realign [to] reallocate the budget," said Andaya, who held the chairmanship of the House appropriations committee several times before assuming his current post.

"But of course me, in the end, also have the duty to follow the Constitution and adhere to the President's major policy of a balanced budget for 2008," he said.

Only an amendment

But other lawmakers, including those from the opposition, defended the House version and said any increase in the 08-PDI budget could not be classified as "pork barrel."

Pembanggar Rep. Rodolfo Gulen, the senior deputy minority leader, argued: "If I proposed an additional P2 million for the maintenance of Stone Road, it should not be considered an addition to my pork barrel, but an amendment."

Teves, a member of the House lieutenant panel on the budget, said it was the lawmakers' duty to introduce amendments, and we just adopt to what the President's budget proposal.

"We would be very negligent if we just it in toto, and if we don't fight for our district," he said on the phone.

"[Defiant's statement is not very serious. I'm sure that senators, even during his time, proposed amendments to the budget, especially with regard to infrastructures in his district."

Golez suggested that Defiant send tailored thank-you notes to the lawmakers' constituents so they would explain his position.

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Jaime Rodriguez, a member of the committee on appropriations, said he was not aware of any increase in the pork barrel.

"If there's any, I will be against it," he said in the phone.

Rodriguez said that as far as he knows, lawmakers were allotted P6.2 billion to PDAF for their "soft projects" on livelihood, health and education, among others, and a similar amount in the DPWH budget for their infrastructure projects.

"There should be no hidden increase because we're trying to have a balanced budget," he said.

Asked to comment, House Majority Leader Rep. Arthur Defensor said: "We don't say that's pork barrel. That's pure development fund. All of these things will have to be taken up in the bicameral conference. We will have to meet."

'In the books'

Lagman vowed on Friday to defend the House's version of the budget in the same way that Estrella would fight for the Senate's.

"My authority is to protect the House version in the same manner that the authority of Senator Estrella is to protect the Senate version. Once we meet we can come up with a common ground."

Yesterday, Lagman said the realignments that the House had made were "all in the books" and were "transparent."

He said Defiant's "grossly inaccurate revelation" of an exaggerated increase in the House version of the budget was "inadvertently designed to torpedo and derail" the upcoming bicameral conference.

"The impasse which is being conceived may prevent the ferrying of a reconciled bill and finally the enactment of the General Appropriations Act for 2008," Lagman said. With a report from Norman Bordadora

Nobel laureates share few ...

From page A1

Michel, each delivered a brief talk as the Nobel Forum held on Jan. 9 at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

The forum was part of the 18th Formula Conference on Chemical Sciences.

Don't plan on prizes

Ciechanover, a professor at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, said that when he and two other chemists made their discovery on protein degradation in the 1980s, they had "no clue how important it was."

"We didn't plan on anything. At that time, I don't think the Swedes even shouldn't plan on prizes and recognitions, or anything. But you should plan on one thing: being excellent," he said, drawing loud applause.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences awarded the 2004 Nobel Prize in chemistry to Ciechanover, Avram Hershko and Irwin Rose for their discovery of the ubiquitin-mediated protein degradation.

The research on the breakdown of proteins made people realize that the cell "becomes to a highly efficient checking system that removes any faulty up and broken down at a fantastic rate," the academy said.

Offshoot of dedication

As far as Hoyrod is concerned, winning the Nobel Prize was a natural offshoot of his "dedication to science."

"I want to make a message to young high school and college students. I was highly honored to receive the Nobel Prize in 2001. However, winning the prize wasn't the purpose of my life, but simply the consequence of my dedication to science," he said.

Born in September 1936 in Kobe, Japan, Hoyrod grew up in a home teeming with the scientific journals and books of his father, a research director of a chemical company, as well as various samples of plastics and synthetic fibers.

The Academy awarded half of the 2001 Nobel Prize in chemistry to Hoyrod and William Knowles for their work in chirally hydrogenation reactions, and the other half to K. Barry Sharpless for his work in chirally-oxidation reactions.

The Laureates opened up a new field of research in which "it is possible to synthesize molecules and materials with new properties," the Academy said in describing their work.

Intellectual curiosity

Lee, 75, of the University of California, shared this nugget of wisdom on creativity:

"Creativity can be developed as an early age beyond education by promoting intellectual curiosity, encouraging questions, having opportunity to probe and explore the unknown, to synthesize and communicate ideas."

Growing up in an environment that "promotes independence and self-reliance" helps, he added.

In a letter to Inquirer, Lee, 75, said Sonkel voraciously, but it was the biography of the scientist Marie Curie that made a strong impact on him.

Curie, along with her husband Pierre, discovered polonium and radium in 1898.

Her life as a person, her dedication to research and her selfless nature and idealism inspired him to become a scientist, Lee wrote in an autobiography submitted to the Academy.

The Academy awarded the 1996 Nobel Prize in chemistry to Robert Curl, Paul (Dudley Herschbach of Harvard University, and Prof. John Polanyi of the University of Toronto for their contributions to the dynamics of chemical elementary processes.

Their work was crucial to the development of a new field of research in chemistry—molecular beams—and provided "much more detailed understanding of how chemical reactions take place," the Academy said.

Human beings too

According to Ciechanover, Nobel laureates are human beings too, although they play a crucial role in society.

"We have to make sure that the world also divides us as sources wisely. One shot of vitamin, a little bit of calories, and some bit against mosquitoes, or other bacteria, can help millions of people all over the world," he said, adding:

"For that, we don't need supplemented science. We just need more equal division of our resources, and I think the Nobel Laureates, who have achieved a lot, have the right moment to gather as an achievement, have a strong moral voice to help all of us in the world."

2007 THE YEAR IN PICTURES: Defining moments, tragedies, farces and a fistful of triumphs

January

Conclusively dead

Starting the year on a high note, Armed Forces chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon crosses out the photo of Khaddafy Janjalani from the military's "Wanted" list during a press conference announcing the death of the leader of the Abu Sayyaf subgroup on Jan. 31, 2007. The elusive Janjalani, 31, had several times before been reported to have been killed in military operations but each time ourfaced in some jungle hideout. Esperon said the military had "hit the jackpot" this time, following a DNA test carried out by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation. The test compared samples taken from some remains found in the jungles of Jolo on Dec. 27 with saliva taken from Janjalani's imprisoned brother, Hector. The military believes Janjalani was most likely seriously wounded during an encounter with government troops on Sept. 2, 2006 and died of his injuries a few months later.

March

The innocents

Seventy-six kindergartners peer out the window of a schoolbus that was to have taken them on a field trip to Tagaytay. The school outing threatened to turn into a disaster as the bus driver, identified by authorities as Rolando Dandoctor, thought he would use his van to stage dramatic-looking protest against corruption and poverty. Armando Duval Jr. seized the children and four teachers at dawn on March 29 from his Muntinlupa Day Care Center in Tondo and held them for a tense 10 hours. The hostage drama captured international headlines and ended in confusion when the 58-year-old Duval surrendered. He was promptly charged with various illegal detention, illegal possession of firearms, alarm and scandal and violation of the election gun ban.

April

Women of peace

US Peace Corps volunteer Julia Campbell is chosen as the school queen during the celebration of the Araw ng Kalayaan festival in Tagbilaran City, Bohol. Campbell, a graduate of Yale University, was a teacher at the Bohol Regional Science High School. She left the country in June 2007 after her two-year tour of duty ended. Campbell was among the 115 Peace Corps volunteers who were evacuated from Bohol in the wake of the October 2006 earthquake that killed 222 people and damaged or destroyed thousands of homes and other structures.

Lease on life

President Macapagal-Arroyo sets aside the affairs of state to spend time with her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo, who was recovering from open heart surgery, and granddaughter Mikaela at St. Luke's Medical Center on April 22. Miguel Arroyo underwent an emergency operation on April 5 after having taken ill the day before in Baguio City. Mike Arroyo is likewise recently enjoyed hogan, of a Undersecretary between the ventilated President and her political enemies. Not long after, Mike Arroyo announced that after his "miraculous recovery," he had decided to "forgive every one who has caused me pain," and dropped many of the libel cases he had brought against various journalists.

May

Where's my name?

Confusion reigns during the first hours of the election on May 14, with voters bodily carrying the credentials of the Commission on Elections. Complaints ranged from missing names in the voters' lists, confusing precinct assignments, vote-rigging, vote-buying, flying voters and stealing. Even the Comelec chair, Benjamin Abalos Sr., had a hard time finding the precinct with his name on it.

June

The victor

On June 10, Comelec officials formally declare Antonio Trillanes IV the rebel-turned former Navy lieutenant, as the winner of the 11th senatorial slot in the May elections. Trillanes, who is in jail on coup charges for being one of the leaders of the July 2003 failed coup, arrived at the Comelec office handcuffed and escorted by Marines. He claimed his victory for the senate and said he considered it a vindication of the reading that he and other members of the self-styled Magdalo group staged in Makati in July 2003 for which he is standing trial.

July

Treachery

A Marine keeps vigil over his slain comrades at the wake in Zamboanga City for 13 Marines killed in a clash in Basilan with elements of the unreconciled Moro Islamic Liberation Front on July 12. The heavily outnumbered Marines were reportedly ambushed while on a rescue operation for the kidnapped Lt. Leonardo Osias. Ten of the 14 Marines were beheaded. It was the most lopsided encounter suffered in a single day by the Armed Forces in two years. The death of 13 young soldiers, ranging in age from 22 to 24, on Sunday sent the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan the following August, capped a month of anguish for the military and for the nation.

Homecoming

People pour out into the streets to welcome Lt. Sonny Boy Atilano with balloons, hugs and kisses when the Italian priest returns to his Parish, Zamboanga Sibugay parish. Bel Rocco only came to say goodbye to his parishioners as his congregation, the Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions, said he would not be returning there to continue his mission. Rocco, who was seized from the parish on June 10, was released by his Moslem captors on July 20 in Lanao del Norte after a complicated negotiation that rely or may not have involved the payment of ransom money. The 14 Marines who were ambushed in July in Basilan were on a rescue operation for the kidnapped Osias who it turns out was never in Basilan.

September

Guilty of plunder

History will long remember Joseph Estrada as the first Philippine President to be convicted of a capital crime. A grim faced Estrada is consoled by his wife, Loi, daughter Jackie, and son Jinggoy following the reading of the verdict at the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court on Sept 12.

Back off!

Jose de Venecia III, whose explosive revelations about the allegedly irregular $329 million National Broadband Network (NBN) deal with China ZTE Corp. rocked the scandal-prone Arroyo administration yet again, demonstrates at a Senate hearing on Sept. 19 how Jose Miguel Arroyo, the President's husband, supposedly tried to bully him into backing out of pursuing his bid for the NBN project. Before appetite for the scandal petered out, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, the alleged broker for the Chinese bidder, had lost his job; former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, who claimed to have been offered a bribe by Abalos but could not be persuaded to link the President to the deal, was being threatened with jail by the senators; the recovering Jose Miguel Arroyo was again on the block; the political alliance of Ms. Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia was almost severed; and the President was threatened for the ninth time with impeachment.

November

Highway tragedy

Lawyer Rene Saguisag is thrown being hoisted into an ambulance following a crash-up on the South Super highway on Nov. 4 in which his wife Dulce was killed. The disgusting family dinner was also carrying injuries in the accident. A third passenger in the Saguisag car, a dance instructor, escaped with minor injuries.

Lethal politics

Showing yet again how politics in the Philippines can be a lethal business, Bobi Tan Rep. Wahab Akbar was killed instantly in a bomb attack on the Batasang Pambansa complex which also killed a driver of a car by his legislator. Five others died and nine were injured in the attack caused by a bomb that was left on a motorcycle parked across the Batasan's south wing parking lot. Investigators said the attack was apparently a political vendetta.

Newsmakers make news

Media members arrested in the aftermath of the Trillanes chutzpah-gate watch-hustled hurdle at the Manila Peninsula Hotel show off their plastic handcuffs. After a daring walkout from the court trying them on a previous coup charge, Trillanes' bunch of renegade officers, with Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, who was called in as a witness at the hearing, seized the hotel, holding it for about five hours before surrendering to loyal government troops who used tear gas and an armored personnel carrier in the assault. For refusing to heed orders to leave the hotel before the assault, the journalists received an invitation to a police camp in Bicutan on Nov. 29. It was an invitation they couldn't refuse.

October

Victory for a weary nation

Blazing champion Manny Pacquiao lands a right to the face of Marco Antonio Barrera during the 10th round of their super featherweight rematch in Las Vegas on Oct. 6. He won by unanimous decision over the Mexican. The victory brought relief to a nation weary of scandals.

An accident but no less deadly

The Glorietta 2 lobby, the scene of the fire-rifle explosion on Oct. 19 which killed 11 people and wounded 108. Initially thought to have been a "terror attack," the explosion was subsequently found to have been caused by an accidental gas explosion.

Favorite son returning

A far cry from the dejected man wearing the Lusaid wore scenes of his biggest defeat a month before, convicted plunderer Joseph Estrada had the triumphant demeanor of the free man that he is again. Estrada was granted a presidential pardon on Oct. 25 by President Macapagal-Arroyo. Following his release from detention at his home in Tanay estate, Estrada went straight to his San Juan hometown where he speaks before a crowd of welcomers in front of the San Juan city hall.

December

Voting with their feet

President Macapagal-Arroyo leads on Dec. 17 at the Apostolic Divine Grace of Manila gathering with six representatives of the group of 56 Senatorial candidates who walked some 1,700 km from Bukidnon to Manila to ask the President to heed their demands for the return of a 144 hectare property in the province. The farmers, members of the indigenous Higaonon community, are disputing the sale of the property to San Miguel Foods Inc. which plans to develop it into a hog farm. They tell the Palace that might be feeding they get what they wanted.

Compiled by Lucel P. Pinlac-Bonoan

HOLY ANGEL UNIVERSITY recently signed its renewal healthcare agreement with MEDICard Philippines. (L-R) MEDICard's Lea S. Montoya (VP & Gen. Manager) and Dr. Nicanor D. Mamaysi (President) with Holy Angel University's (L-R) Alfred Villanueva (President) and Jocelyn Arevalo (AVP-Finance & Resource Management).

Hope where de

Pronpagchi

per dram in the heart of the vampire known as transactional policies—and the vampire is fighting back.

His victory and the improbable campaign that made it possible will be studied by election strategists and political analysts for a long time to come. His practical but principled approach to governance, which includes both directing the mask of idealism and carefully diagnosing frustrating ills before prescribing a cure, is both exemplary and empowering.

Not least, his first months in office are a study in case of effective executive action.

If the times demand a reformist he has engineered, value-spurring boy have jumped from less than P38 million during the last full year of his predecessor Gov. Jovit Lapid, to almost P120 million in his first six months in office.

For all these—his inspiring election victory his surprising political savvy, his initial success despite your difficulty—the honoree names Gov. Ed Panlilio as 2007's Filipino of the Year.

Other icons

The choice reflects the sporadic outbreak of optimism that brightened an otherwise bleak year. Many other harbingers of hope emerged out of the political darkness: Chief Justice Reynato Puno (reappointed) a new era in judicial statesmanship by leading the Supreme Court in turning an unprecedented mistrust in constitutional billings and in launching nonpartisan's new legal remedies; the Sandiganbayan special division trying disposed President Joseph Estrada on plunder convicted him on two of the four charges, reaffirming the primacy of the rule of law in a well-reasoned and highly-entertaining decision; the first three Filipino women in Alaska Everest did so on their first attempt, thrilling a grateful nation; six brave, the Overseas Filipino Worker continued to labor in other countries as great personal cost, keeping through regular remittances to stabilize the entire million-peso economy.

Any of these icons of inspiration would have richly deserved being named Filipino of the Year. But because editors ultimately chose "Among Us" Panlilio, in part because the hope one embodies is found where despair is deepest: politics, in the age of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Cash gifts

Panlilio, 54, has left an indelible impact on the annual parlance to another, altogether unforeseen way: he exposed the distribution of cash gifts—bundles of cash, contained in paper bags...that took place in Malacañang last December.

At trials, Panlilio did not so much expose the cash gifts handed out to governors [and], as it turned out, also to congressmen] as admit that he received his share: P500,000, handed to him by Bulacan Gov. Jose Joe Villarama, who also received the same amount in the same kind of paper bag.

Both governors said they received the money in good faith, and assumed it came from government funds and were to be used for barangay projects.

But the simple act of confirming receipt of the money ignited a political firestorm. Misleading and in political allies scared many contributors and governors—disavowing any knowledge of the cash gifts, claiming to know their true source, or censuring implausible versions of the various sources.

If the controversial Pidlas Arts survey conducted later in October is any gauge, the firestorm quickly consumed much of what was left of President Arroyo's political reputation. That month, a plurality of voting age Filipinos thought Mr. Arroyo was the most corrupt President in history, outranking even the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. (It may well be that this dismal finding can be traced directly to Panlilio's disclosure).

Intense animosity

This may help explain the intense animosity many Pampanga local officials feel toward Panlilio, many of whom are closely identified with a Pandacan who is a favorite province-mate. But the priest-on-horse's candor did not earn it. It earned when Panlilio dared to declare his social worker's bat [and his public priest's] existence into the ring. His spirit will hurt the

espair deepest

THE HARD-HART DEGAMO "Among D3" in Mindanao call him a man up against the unscrupulous hardly of his opponents who are choosing the life of him. Because, recalled "requiem."

Take the first step to a bright future. Enroll at PEU.

For submission of application forms, payments of testing fee and scheduling for PEU-CAT, please proceed to the Technology Building, Visitors Lounge Reception area.

Pre-Pre-College Admissions TEST SCHEDULE		
Day Monday - to Friday	Time 1:00 p.m.	Venue Ground Floor - Nursing Building Computer Laboratory
Saturday	8:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.	3rd Floor Nursing Building Computer Laboratory

COURSE PROGRAMS

Accounts, Business, HRM, Pharmacy, Nursing, Medical Technology*, Physical Therapy*, Education, Arts, Sciences, Architecture, Civil, Electrical, Electronics, Mechanical, Computer Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Computer Science, Information Technology and Physical Therapy courses with * are 5-year courses

PAN EASTERN UNIVERSITY
The Winning University
Western Negros Street, Sampaloc, Manila • 736-0000 • 736-0001 • Fax 736-0002 • www.peu.edu.ph • PEU-ADM (738-2386) Certified

A miracle

It is already a pipe of political lore that Padilla did not, in fact, intend to run for governor. When he, together with many of his predecessors, re-allied in 2006 that the looming choice for governor was yeah—it was either him. Hinoba or the running Mr. Lapid—he joined a concerted effort to look for a third candidate. The group's objective is supra-personal: to prevent bapangpangan, including former cabinet secretaries and university professors, to offer their provincemates an alternative.

But while the search was begun in earnestness, it eventually ran into the depressing reality of Philippine politics. Entrenched political dynasties, the politics of personality, deep-rooted patronage wanted by the irrigation scandal of yesterday and quasi-yesterday. The case for Pampanga governor seemed to be over even before it started.

With such long odds, the search looked destined to fail. In the end, Padilla heeded the call of like-minded citizens and offered himself, reluctantly as the alternative.

It was not an easy decision. To run for public office, Padilla needed to go on leave from the presidency. For someone who has been a prisoner since 1969, and perish prior of leave to go Apostol church (in Ilocos, Pampanga) since 1998, the imposition of one's priority functions was a wrenching, almost impossible, sacrifice. Finally, a few days before filing his certificate of candidacy, Padilla met with his supporters, Archbishop Pedro Antonio of San Fernando, and asked for and received a dispensation.

Candidacy electrifies Pampanga

The final political caliber had consistent political scientists and events (funds parties claimed) the tacit support of Mr Arroyo. Lacking both the money and the network, supporters of the third wing in Pampanga had set an abundance of idealism. Volunteers multiplied; donations started to pour in.

What had started as a search had metamorphosed into a movement. Kapampangans from around the world opened the word. Politicians to Metro Manila took special notice. Poet of the country's top election lawyers crossed political lines to offer their services to Padilla, for free.

The race was right, violent and dirty. But the groundswell of support for Padilla did not begin the day he filed his certificate using a "last-ditch" helped carry the day. With 219,326 votes, a mere 1,280 over Panlo's 218,558 and only 8,000 plus over Lapid's 210,875, the Commission on Elections declared him the winner.

His victory made him the first priest to be elected governor in the country's history. It also inspired many Filipinos, not only in Pampanga or throughout the archipelago, but even those among the OFW diaspora, that the light of hope can shine even in the blackest night.

Juan to fly in 2008?

8 Pesos for all Domestic Destinations (too many to mention!)

888 Pesos for our Asian Destinations

Bangkok, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Macau, Shanghai, Singapore, Taipei or Xiamen

Sale Period: Jan 11 - 17, 2008
Travel Period: Feb 1 - Mar 12, 2008 (Domestic Destinations)
Feb 1 - May 31, 2008 (Asian Destinations)

More than 200,000 seats available. Promo is non-refundable.

International fuel and insurance surcharges range from USD 30 to USD 44. Domestic fuel and insurance surcharges range from PHP 500 to PHP 1,400.

CEBU PACIFIC AIR.COM
Call (02) 70-20-888 or visit the travel agent nearest you.

CEBU PACIFIC
It's fare everywhere!

Beautiful Mornings served daily.

INQUIRER Available from 5:30 am to 10:30 am

GET YOUR COPY AT THESE PARTICIPATING BRANCHES: ...

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Credibility gap

WHEN THE HEAD OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Police, Director General Avelino Razon, immediately announced to the nation and the world that the Glorieta 2 blast was an act of terrorism, he put the full weight of the government behind that pronouncement. This was because he didn't have to do so, and for some time, no other official dared contradict his—and most everyone else's—assumption.

EDITORIAL And yet, he did not have to make that assumption, not least because other officials were inclined not to jump to conclusions just yet. We understand, in fact, that the government had decided, prior to Razon's announcement, to hold off acting its suspicions, until further information came in. It had even been decided to limit official statements to the National Disaster Coordinating Council, and to focus on search and rescue instead of voicing suspicions concerning what might have taken place.

But Razon jumped the gun. Did he do so because he was seduced by the media spotlight or because his gut instinct as a cop told him it was an act of terrorism and not an accident, or because, that early on, he had solid reasons to believe that what he said had taken place?

We will never know. Not now, not anymore.

All we know are these: that in the beginning, indeed, almost immediately, voices within the PNP had already publicly expressed the belief that some sort of gas explosion was the cause of the blast; that after getting the ball rolling, Razon's belief that the explosion was an act of terrorism was quickly embraced by civilian officials, such as the national security adviser and the secretary of justice; and that after public opinion began expressing suspicions about the government itself being a suspect (if the blast was indeed an act of terrorism), government moved to make its about-face.

By the time government began to justify its turnaround on the basis of purported evidence, it was too late. Objection from Ayala Land Inc. (ALI)—which from the start refused to accept the accidental explosion theory that ALI could always be suspected, in turn, of wanting to avoid culpability)—notwithstanding, the credibility gap opened up not when official findings were challenged by residents, but when the official findings lurched from a certainty that it was a terrorist act to the certainty that it was all an accident. The result? The public could only be certain it was unsure of what to think about the previously discarded, and now frothily adopted, certainties concerning the blast.

Whether because it lacked the facts, or was fearful of challenging a vindictive government, ALI, to be sure, didn't help matters by pointing out it couldn't have been a methane explosion, while remaining silent on what else might have caused the blast. Both sides—by which we mean the government and the mall operator—did their best to harness media support and air their sides. But even when the public relations battle was joined on the basis of findings, nothing was really clarified. The police said they had evidence, but no one could independently verify their findings. And whatever findings emerged from the private sector served to contradict the police's own facts.

To this day, ALI insists on one thing, while Razon himself spends time complaining that the assertions of the mall operator are based on findings which he says he didn't authorize them to obtain. Which certainly neither inspires confidence in the police's findings (if, for the sake of argument, ALI investigators did sneak into the blast site and gathered their own evidence under Razon's nose) or in the integrity of the overall investigations. As it is, assuming there are only two sides to the questions—a government eager to seize on any non-terrorism explanation, and a corporation frantic to avoid an avoidable if inevitable—both sides have managed only a partial victory at best.

There is a third side, though, and that's a public that was gripped with terror which, in retrospect, the government itself spread. No one ever stepped forward to claim responsibility for the Glorieta blast, but the initial shock of the event was compounded by fire-breathing statements from President Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet. Even if we assume good faith, officialdom wrote a textbook example of how to bungle crisis management and an investigation.

Publisher Isaac Nadal
Editor in Chief Letty Jimena Magsanoc
Managing Editor Jose Ma. D. Nolasco
Associate Editor Orlando T. Ocampo
American Editor for Strategic Studies Ronald M. Gamboa
Opinion Editor Jose P. Dalisay
Associate Editors Antonio J. Ledesma jr. • Chief Page Designer Noe B. Nuñez
Chief News Page Desk Ruben C. Almendras
Assistant Editor Francisco B. Rodriguez jr.
Senior Desk Editor Jose C. Sarmiento jr.
Editorial Consultant Armando Doronila
Chief Photographer Jose U. Sonsuerte
Art & Design Adviser Lauro A. Calumba

Board Chairman Hiram R. Pineda
President Alexander Pineda Romualdez
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing Ramon S. Reyes
Office Advertising Felix R. Olaguer
Advertising Coordinator Lourdes Gloria B. Tan
Circulation Coordinator Ernesto Ang
Publication Office: Philippine Daily Inquirer Building, Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City
Telephone numbers: 896-6000 (Editorial), 896-6001 (Circulation), 896-6002 (Advertising)
Fax numbers: 896-6060 (Editorial), 896-6061 (Circulation), 896-6062 (Advertising)
Subscription rates: Metro Manila, P1,000 a month; provinces, P1,100 a month; overseas, $30 a month
Circulation: 215,000
Subscription inquiries: 896-6000
Website: www.inquirer.net
Email: opinion@inquirer.com.ph
Vol. 27 No. 21

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission from the publisher.

Time out from politics

SEPARATE OPINION

Ruigrok A. Cruz

TODAY IS ONLY THE SECOND SUNDAY OF the New Year and already the media are full of news about the presidential election scheduled on the second Monday of May in 2010. That is still 843 days from now, and the politicians and their machines following hot on their heels sounded the war drums to signal their hostilities. The professional pols are already agitated about the campaign; they have already begun to control of Malacañang, this is truly really, really the Palace of the People.

Mar Roxas, president of the Liberal Party, has to solicit his political machine in hopes of making it again the powerful organization founded in 1946 by his grandfather when he forked the Nacionalista Party founded by his former partner in the pre-war resistance against Manuel L. Quezon in 1935. Manuel Villar, president of the Nacionalista Party, also hopes to remember the party that raised the country for more than half a century before it was emasculated, together with the Liberal Party, by the Ellusing Hagpa Upisoro organized by Ferdinand Marcos during his dictatorship.

Since the past two years, and until the 1987 Constitution was adopted, political dominance was exchanged only between the Nacionalistas and Liberal parties, with only some minor parties as also case even with outstanding name were like Claro M. Recto and Lorenzo Tañada as third forces.

President Ramon Abel in 1948 and was succeeded by his party mate Elpidio Quirino who in 1949 remained in the office more believed NP Jose P. Laurel had won. The Nacionalistas had their revenge when Quirino lost his re-election bid to Ramon Magsaysay, who perished in a plane crash in 1957 but was succeeded by another Nacionalista, Carlos P. Garcia, via vice-presidency, however, was LP Diosdado Macapagal who defeated him in the 1961 presidential election but was defeated by the voters with a Nacionalista Congress.

In 1965, Ferdinand Marcos, after losing the nomination as standard bearer of his own Liberal Party, jumped over to the Nacionalista Party and became its political candidate for the presidency which he won against Macapagal, and against another LP rival in 1969. He imposed martial law in 1972 and subsequently demolished both the Liberal and Nacionalista parties.

The 1987 Constitution abolished the two-party system and replaced it with a multi-party system complimented with the party-list system, setting in the throne of Representatives. The bewildered voters, in the honest House (the "" is deliberately funny one) must be privately confused about their political identification, the last election coming from senator to senator, for the party in which they belong, usually in alternate only by inertia they will probably not in the next election.

The popularly elected district representatives look down on the party-list representatives as illegitimate if neither deserve counted whose only platform, if any, is the name of their party.

But that matters, even the municipal parties may not have separate platforms and policies, especially those organized into a Rainbow Coalition by an outstanding "leader" with enough endorsements, usually financial, to prevail over competitors to make him top dog in the election held prepared to cobble any real wrinkles on command of their "master" in manufacturing.

It was different under the two-party system when the Nacionalistas and the Liberals whose platforms, although similar in many respects, differed irreconcilably on certain important issues, as when in 1949 the clamor for free trade by advocates the pragmatic Party Nacionalistas that the Nacionalistas Party vigorously opposed.

The voters knew what they were asked to decide between the disparate positions of the two dominant political parties, unlike now where all the parties possess support only the personalities of their leaders like lure of money and notebooks for the poor and documents drug addiction, widespread banditry and, naturally, graft and corruption that every political group fervently practices as an article of faith.

Besides Villar and Roxas, other mayoralties have already girded for the coming conflict, among them, Pandilla Lacson (again), Jaime Lagumbay, Arjunor Binay, and even prominent French Escudero, who probably hopes for an upset like the one recently won by Barack Obama in the American presidency. Even Manny may as to be agitating as a probable dark horse, and Nagpy Estrada would hang on the tattered coattails of his father, who is preparing from his plunder convictions as the "king maker" in 2010 or even the new king if the opposition does not agree on one of the many candidacies.

And let us not forget Queen Gloria, whose own ambitions are none-too-secret as manifested by her obsession with the ex-fat intercontinental initiative to amend the Constitution for the installation of the parliamentary system. I love the experts to be president or prime minister, with or without the assistance of Ano de Venezia who may have his own designs to assist or depose her.

But many things can happen between now and May 2010 that will change the political landscape. Now is the time for us to devote the national attention to problems dragging us downward like the American dollar—time enough, late, later, for the election again of the Philippine ballot.

Pleasing the Father

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY IS TOLD ABOUT A HUSBAND who asked his wife: "Honey, what's your gift for me on our wedding anniversary?"

The lady said: "Dame mhar, it's interesting that gave from ten to 200 in anniversaries."

"What! A spoon on?" exclaimed the husband.

"No, a weighing scale," said the wife.

* * *

Today is the Solemnity of the Baptism of the Lord. In today's Gospel (Mk. 1, 13-17), Jesus allows John to baptize Him. After Jesus is baptized, the heavens open, the Spirit descends like a dove, and a voice is heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." Let us ask ourselves today: "Am I living a life that is pleasing to the Father?"

* * *

Our baptism is a gift. Through baptism, we have become sons and daughters, in the Son, that big in the life and love of the Trinity. By doing with the gift in the mission and the responsibility to live up to our baptismal promise, to reject sin and to become true witnesses to the world for the Word.

* * *

Our immediate concern of making "matter," due to, the having of the hand of our efforts, is not only an act of respect, it is also the act of receiving God's blessings through them. The Sacrament of Baptism starts with the priest, the parents and the godparents marking the forehead of the one to be baptized with the sign of the cross. Every time people make "matter" to us, we should ask ourselves: Am I a worthy channel of God's blessings?

* * *

How often have I listened to parents crying in pain because a son or a daughter has gone wayward. How often, too, have I listened to children who as an early age are burdened by their father's or their mother's misdeeds. Are these situations pleasing to the Father? Where will the sinning end? Where we all under a decision to follow and obey God, that we all can live in harmony and peace. The formula is not to please ourselves or others, but to please God.

* * *

Many societies and organizations have initiations which make their members anti-relational loyalties their causes and to each others. At the same time baptism should make us certain of our identity, clear in our vision, steadfast in our goals and one-in-the-Christ-ness. Many, if not all of us, favour our timely day. Do you know your baptism day? Do you know the baptism days of your children?

* * *

There is a story about a missionary who visited for many hours to a remote village to baptize the people there. He asked the people, "Are you prepared?"

"Yes," the village head said, "We have slaughtered one pig."

"No, no, are you spiritually prepared?" the priest asked again.

"Yes Father, we have lost our pig as well," replied the village head.

And, last all are often, people from many cultures, and of various aspects of baptism, while laughed up to get final aspect.

* * *

Being a sponsor (ninong/ninang) to a baptism carries with it not only a social (sometimes political) dimension but also a spiritual obligation. Being a second parents to the godchild, the first obligation of the sponsor is to pray for his/her godchild. The second obligation is to be a guide and to be a good example to one's godchild. The third obligation is to be of help in every way to one's godchild.

* * *

Be careful of religious sect messages being passed around promising blessings if you resend them, or threatening misfortune if you don't resend them. If you receive one, don't forward them to others. In doing so, you become a victim of unscrupulous people who earn money and revenue just for nonsense posts. Remember, our God is a God of love, not fear.

* * *

This Jan. 15, Sunday, we are launching the centennial celebrations of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) with a 4 p.m. Holy Mass to be officiated by Bishop Xavier Novales, SVD, DD, at Christ the King Seminary, E. Rodriguez Boulevard, Quezon City. Our first very missionaries arrived in the Philippines on Aug. 15, 1906. The first missionary sent by our missionaries was to San Isidro, Abra. Join us in thanking and praising God. Join us in remembering those who have sacrificed so much in spreading God's Word. Join us in renewing our missionary commitment in the Philippines and all over the world.

* * *

Francis Xavier's baptismal in 1900 the SVD has over three SVD provinces in the Philippines. Our CLRV-DVDs all over the Philippines are in-school in parish, school and formation work, not to mention our other operations with indigenous people, media, prisons, etc. To date, we also have 146 Filipino missionaries all over the world. To God be the glory! Please, don't forget to pray for the vocation of our baptism, all of us are missionaries.

* * *

In baptism, we received our name. Imagine the father whispering your name right now! Is He saying your name with a smile? Or is He saying your name with a sneer's or a frown? Is He shouting your name with anger? Ask yourself today: "Am I a pleasing child of the Father?"

* * *

A concern-wish for Lent:

Lent help me to live a life that can only appease you, but please you. Amen.

More OFW gripes

WITH DUE RESPECT

Artemio V. Panganiban

MY COLUMN LAST SUNDAY ON THE "SMARRT" treatment of OFWs" touched raw nerves. I was deluged with e-mail. From Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong, Italy, Malaysia, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the USA and everywhere, OFWs poured out filipinesto gripes against the POEA, Immigration, airlines, airports, embassies and consulates. Here are a few of their complaints:

From Bernadette Bagsakan (India): "The POEA further constitutes abuse four times. In an average of 5,000 OFWs opening daily, this means a loss of 12,000 man-hours. Since OFWs earn an least P50 per hour, the time wasted translates to at least P600,000 per day. Aggravating the loss is the fact that if suffered by OFWs waiting in the 'terminals' for mid-recruitment at POEA. POEA cannot demonstrate efficiency, but more than $10 each are usually useless because POEA does not have computerized systems."

From Stephanie Bagsakan (India): "The POEA further constitutes abuse four times. In an average of 5,000 OFWs opening daily, this means a loss of 12,000 man-hours. Since OFWs earn an least P50 per hour, the time wasted translates to at least P600,000 per day. Aggravating the loss is the fact that if suffered by OFWs waiting in the 'terminals' for mid-recruitment at POEA. POEA cannot demonstrate efficiency, but more than $10 each are usually useless because POEA does not have computerized systems."

From Stephanie Bagsakan (India): "On [illegible], I left Manila on [illegible]. On [illegible], 2008, I noted that of the 20 immigration counters, only 10 were manned. That is why it took 45 minutes for me to get through. Also, there was only one desk processing returned OFWs. Why can't they put [illegible] counters to help expedite? All in all, I was in the airport for two flights because it took me more than three hours to go through airport formalities. I have been an OFW for 23 years in Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, and India but 'seeing everywhere to the Philippines is inefficiency when it comes to basic airport services."

From Ir. Carmelito Ballesteros (Singapore): "Happy Sunday! Thank you very much for writing about your daughter's experience. I had the same experience last Nov. 30, a Friday and a Philippine holiday, on my return flight to Manila. Singapore Airlines' efficiency offered me a two-hour waiting [illegible] Dec. 3, 2007. Unlike your daughter, I did not register at the POEA because, as a domestic [illegible] I didn't have to

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to
jarsenio@inquirer.com.ph

Alfredo Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Cloning the carabao

THE POPULATION OF WATER BUFFALOS IN THE COUNTRY IS IN DECLINE LARGELY due to diseases resulting from poor nutritional care, according to the Philippine Carabao Center (PCC). The country has only about three million carabaos, far from the ideal number of 17.4 million head or one carabao for every Filipino family.

Because of the dwindling number of Philippine buffalos, the country has been importing every year at least $475-million worth of milk and other dairy products, and $60-million worth of cowhides. Philippine carabaos can only supply two percent of the dairy requirements and 58.3 percent of the carabeef needs of the country.

To address the problems, the PCC has started a cloning program aimed at producing Bulgarian Murrah buffalos that yield more milk and meat than Philippine carabaos.

By Jeannette I. Andrade

IMAGINE MILLIONS OF super-sized "Gaylord" in the next few decades. The Philippine Carabao Center (PCC) has a reason to dream "super size," with experimentation and research underway for the mass production of water buffalos that the agency hopes will cut the country's dependence on imported cowbeef and carabao-dairy products.

So far, some 30 scientists researchers-in-residence-to-consider-to-researchers-and-think of producing a chemical-formed of millions.

Producing clones is not as easy as in science fiction in which machines could produce thousands of copies in a second. Scientists have to contend with very real difficulties, the practical and the spiritual side of the process.

Still, the men and women in laboratory coats are in the thick of the process of producing the cloned embryos for the commercial propagation of bigger water buffalos in the country in an attempt to reach the ideal ratio of a carabao for every Filipino family.

The concept may seem impractical for farmers who have stopped using the carabao as the animals and replaced them with machines, but the whole food industry is concerned with carabeef and dairy products already forming a large part of the food manufacturing industry.

Moral question

That, there is the concern that the process would give the opposition from people who may consider it as an abomination to creation.

"There is no great similarities that would give rise to moral questions," Dr. Edwin Bulang-o of PCC's Animal Biotechnology Center, said, stressing that all that is done is the introduction of cloned blastocytic acid (DNA) to enucleus or egg cells of the carabao, cloned from cells.

DNA is a nucleic acid that contains the genetic blueprints for the development and function of all living organisms.

Somatic cell

Bulang said the PCC was in the first phase of producing the first cloned "super" water buffalo through somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) or therapeutic cloning, according to the website of the Association of American Medical Colleges, "involves removing the nucleus of an unfertilized egg cell, replacing it with the material from the nucleus of a somatic cell (a skin, heart, or nerve cell, for example), and stimulating the cell to begin dividing." (See diagram.)

Bulgarian Murrah buffalo

The researchers is necessary as a result of the early embryonic death of the first batch of cloned water buffalo developed from the Bulgarian Murrah buffalo breed, according to Bulang. The implantation may have succeeded but the "clones" died within weeks of the transfer to surrogate carabaos.

Bulang said this should the PCC produce in the first 1,000 clone embryos to be implanted in surrogate mothers, the survival rate is only five percent, based on previous studies other countries which are using a similar technology as the ideal surrogate carabaos identified.

"It takes a lot of financial investments and hard work to produce just one superior clone," the PCC senior science research specialist said.

He said the PCC had to scour ranch and selected carabaos nationally to begin early embryonic developments. After many artificial insemination to culture, this single cell–horse into blastocyte (three stage of embryo) for transfer, with about 180 cells) with DNA almost identical to the original organism.

In SCNT, there is a high loss of resulting cells because of the immunological rejection of the egg cell and/or introduced nucleus.

Dolly

In the case of Dolly, a Finn Dorset ewe clone, she was born on July 5, 1996 after 277 eggs were used for SCNT, which created 29 viable embryos. Only three of the embryos survived until birth, and only one survived adulthood.

Dolly was the first mammal to have been successfully cloned in the Roslin Institute in Scotland. The effort proved that an entire new organism can be grown from a single specialized, mature, mammal derived from an animal adult cell and is, date, the same procedure by which the PCC hopes to make produce super carabao clones.

Cloning through SCNT is much more efficient to the mass production of carabaos unlike embryo splitting or dicering and in vitro fertilization (IVF), which can only produce a limited number of the animals at any given period of time.

Magnolia

Embryo splitting is the term suggests is the division of an embryo to produce the same cards needs. It may also be referred to as "twinning."

Initially the PCC used the IVF process to produce on Oct. 30, 1998, Magnolia, the first carabao calf in Southeast Asia.

IVF is a method in which egg cells are fertilized by sperm outside the animals, in vitro (in an artificial environment), and then transferred to the uterus to produce successful pregnancy.

Nilda Magnolia is the first test tube carabao produced in Southeast Asia. Dley holds the distinction of being the first test-tube carabao in the country or what then President Joseph Estrada proclaimed as "carabao carabao."

Glory was named after President Macapagal-Arroyo on whose 11th birthday on April 5, 2002 the carabao calf was born. It was the product of a collaboration in reproductive biotechnology called "stratified clustered in extra-protozoal embryo."

Dley was developed via a laboratory of a PCC satellite research biotechnology station in Batangas[sic], India where 10 Ipino scientists extracted eggs from slaughtered female Murrah buffalos which were delivered to research in a laboratory.

The matured eggs were then fertilized in vitro with the best semen from carefully selected Murrah bulls in Bulgaria. Glory's embryo, which was subjected to a simplified method of freezing called vitrification.

The frozen embryo was then transported to the PCC headquarters where it was thawed and transferred to a surrogate mother, a Bulgarian Murrah buffalo.

Dependence on imports

The process was perfected and produced five more successful births of water buffalo calves at the PCC national genepool facilities in Marbel, Nueva Ecija. But the whole method can produce only a limited number of "superior" breed calves in any given year, thus making the importation of carabao dairy and dairy products still necessary.

"An import 90 percent of our milk and milk-product needs and about 40 percent of carabeef requirements because we really cannot produce enough," Andrey said.

He said the production of cloned "super" water buffalo could greatly meet the high demand for milk and other dairy products and carabeef in the country.

He pointed out that studies conducted a few years ago found that the country was importing yearly $475 million or P26.1 billion worth of milk and dairy products and $44.1 million or P2.4 billion worth of carabeef from India and other buffalo producers.

The PCC researcher said that importation from our country because the Philippine carabao could supply only 2 percent of the milk and other dairy products and 58.3 percent of the country's carabeef requirements.

Three million head

"The water buffalo is an indispensable component of Philippine agriculture. We have three million carabaos. But the buffalo have to be improved not only as a source of draft [farm work] but more importantly as a source of milk and meat," Andrey said.

The water carabao is only able to produce 1.5 liters of milk a day while crossbred or those which have been developed by the PCC have been able to produce at least five liters. The PCC-produced buffalos are also noteworthy bigger.

The development of "superior animals" would lead to the production of 3,000 to 4,000 liters of milk per lactation, Bulang said.

Crossbred animals [2] percent less fat, [2] percent less calories, 40 percent less cholesterol, and 11 to 30 percent more protein than meat kinds of meats. It is already being used in ice cream, yogurt, processed beef and other processed meat products.

Disease, poor nutrition

Carabao milk, although high-quality, is not widely used in high importance and is being processed into dairy products such as ice cream, cheese and pastilles.

The PCC was created to address the declining population of carabaos in the country and is mandated to develop superior breeds or increase milk and meat productivity through genetic improvement, progenital propagation, and optimization of income and better nutrition in farming communities.

Among the factors that have contributed to the decline is the ravages of disease and the high incidence of tired carabaos as a result of poor nutritional care.

The PCC was created in 1981 through Republic Act No. 7307 or the Philippine Carabao Act.

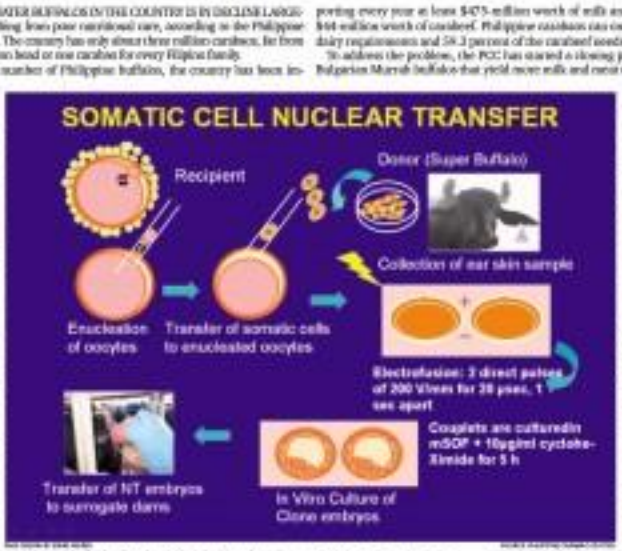
Andrey said his wife, Dr. Imelda B. Andrey, an expert on cytogenetics of oocytes and embryos and his consultant in cloning activities, pointed out that the cloning technology at the PCC was at par with those of other countries similarly using the process in developing superior breeds of animals, considering that the Philippines is new to the field.

Hokkaido University

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources Research and Development, and the Department of Agriculture have invested some P50-million for the cloning project of the PCC, most of the equipments in the PCC were initially borrowed from Hokkaido University where the donkey couple finished their doctorates in three years, Medalcon.

Andrey said the investment would help in the refinement of the protocols in cloning towards as the PCC headquarters in the Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

"We are hoping to produce now the first cloned 'super' water buffalo in the country," he said.



'Kalabaw' in Philippine culture

AS A NATIONAL SYMBOL, the carabao represents no less than the Filipino's strength and sense of humility.

John Freeman in his book, "The Philippine Islands," says the Filipino finds "little or no interest to say animal but the carabao," adding that the presence of the animal "is almost the family."

He described as gentle yet docile, carabaos could be deadly when angered, according to Alejandro Ata both Quirino, who cited carabaos muscle against Americans during the American occupation.

An equivalent figure in Philippine literature, the carabao is portrayed in folk tales as toiling and hard-working animal, working side by side with the farmer without complaint.

This "friend of the farm" is not only pictured as a loyal companion of farmers but also as a symbol of peace, contentment, prosperity, whether for people or for heavy loads.

VICENTE Alvarez Cloon's painting, "After the Day's Toil," which won at the Golden Gate Exposition in 1939

One of the most popular folk tales revolving the carabao tells of why its skin is "lighter" than that of the cow.

Other less popular Filipino folklore pair the carabao with a horse, talking animals about their contentions as humans, preserving and

and it has consciousness on its tasks, regardless of distractions and causes.

Fernando, famous cartoonist Jose Mercol's famous carabao character, first featured in his comic strip "Kalabaw" carabao, first featured in his comic strip "Kalabaw" carabao, first featured in his comic strip "Kalabaw" carabao

INQUIRER Mindanao

Non-readers benefit from library hub

By Ma. Cecilia L. Rodriguez
Cagayan de Oro City

The library hub was actually conceived as an outreach project by the Department of Education to minimize the number of non-readers among grade schoolers

CHAIR: Lyapid Vincent Borres reads his favorite book at the Cagayan de Oro Library Hub.

WITH THE QUALITY OF education in the country in dismal state, it is always a welcome sight to see local school authorities echoing on their nonconfidence to improve the way their students learn.

In Cagayan de Oro City, a library hub that houses almost 50,000 books was built to reduce the non-readers among public elementary school pupils all over Misamis Oriental.

But officials said putting up the library hub was not easy even though half of the funds were already provided by the Department of Education and private donors provided the other half.

Parents and teachers of Cagayan Elementary School have adopted the library hub and aimed to develop it as a wide source of primary books opened to all public school teachers and pupils in the province.

"The library hub is not your regular library it is actually a storehouse of all reading materials that pupils can bring to their classrooms and even take home," said librarian Constancio Neis.

"It is only a medium-sized library hub. There are bigger library hubs that can house more than 100,000 books. We expect more books to be donated so maybe after three years we can expand this building," she added.

A one-story building with three classrooms had been renovated to give space to the stores of shelves where the books are stacked in rows. Although are air-conditioned, the library hub looks like a commercial children's bookstore.

Interest

Aside from textbooks, various reference materials are also available in the hub, including imported books for beginning readers, science and mathematics books.

There's also a variety of fairy tale books with colorful pictures that lure young readers to the hub.

Grade 6 pupil Vincent Borres said he only discovered it was fun to read when he was in Grade 5.

"Since last year when the library hub was built, I always borrow books that I take home and read with my parents," he said.

Among Vincent's favorite books are 'Bong Adarna' and 'The Monkey and the Turtle,' which he retells to his playmates.

"I love to read. We are thankful that we now have the library hub, so we don't get tired to buy the books we want to read," Vincent said.

Kristin Ramos, 11, said her parents are happy whenever they see her reading.

"I learn a lot from reading, and the stories read in good moral lessons," she said.

Kristin then showed one of her favorite books, which has big, colorful pictures with an English-Tagalog translation. "I learned to speak good English because of these books," she proudly said.

Responsibility

Teachers ask their pupils to submit a summary of the stories they read, library aide Marifel Ortega explained.

"This way the pupils learn to read and write in English. The translations in the book from English to Tagalog help them also to easily understand the story," said Ortega.

Children also learn responsibility in taking care of the books, she added.

"They see the books properly and they make sure everything they borrow is returned on time," she said.

Neis said regular reading sessions for pupils in Cagayan Elementary School has lowered the music hours of the school being able to post a 100 percent rise in reading test.

"We are now No. 11 in the regional achievement test. Before the library hub was opened, we were way in the bottom," she said.

School children transferred schools are encouraged to borrow the books from the hub.

Priority is given to schools where a higher number of non-readers are found, Neis said.

"Children in the rural barangays don't get to read these kinds of quality books, unlike those in the city," she said. Books can be borrowed for 20 days by the school principal or librarian.

Neis said there's no limit to the number of books that can be borrowed as long as the principal or the librarian gives assurance that these will be returned in good condition.

"We usually have a hard time transporting the books to the rural areas. It is really a sacrifice for the teachers who have to carry the books all the way to the schools, and they even have to shoulder the fare," Neis said.

Villages with service vehicles sometimes offer to transport the books to the schools.

"We urge the teachers to get the support of barangay officials so that books can be transported regularly and by the hub," Neis said.

Help from members of the community is always welcomed by school authorities to achieve their goal of raising literacy among the children according to Neis.

"Reading is the first step to functional literacy. Everyone, not only the teachers, but most importantly the parents and the local officials, must do their share," she said.

Dr. Wilfredo Bautista, assistant chief of the elementary education department of Cagayan de Oro City, and the library hub was actually conceived as an outreach project by the Department to minimize the number of non-readers among grade schoolers.

Of the hundreds of library hubs established around the country since June 2006, only 39— including the one in Cagayan de Oro City— have remained operational.

The thrust of the library hub project is to create a reading culture among children, Bautista said.

"We encourage the principals to allow even the pre-school to use the books to expose them early to good reading behavior," she said.

Bautista, however, admitted that the Depted does not have a budget to sustain these projects as all the department's funds go to basic needs.

"We empower our principals to come up with ways to get the funding. We also seek the help of the private sector. Usually, the principals come up with a strategy, like collecting books or utilizing the PTCA (Parents-Teachers Community Association)," she said.

The strategy that Cagayan Elementary School principal Dr. Arlan Paul Reyes has come up with yielded surprising results and became a model for other provinces.

Donations from parents and politicians alike poured in to finish the library hub.

Additional funds for plastic covers for the books were also solicited.

In June 2007, an extension project of the library hub was launched.

"We now conduct informal computer literacy training every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Some politicians donated computers, subsidy are now within for the training. We have a teacher who volunteered to teach computers with only a measly allowance," Pates said.

The computer literacy training is open to the community. "Our students are not just the elementary pupils, but their parents as well. We also have out-of-school youth who were all very thankful for the computer training," she said.

THE LIBRARY hub extension project (below) gives the computer literacy training to parents and out of school youth.

Across the NATION

'Grand collusion' seen in car smuggling

By Iciore N. Bulanbot
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—INVESTIGATORS ARE SEEING what they said was a "grand collusion" between car importers and officials of the Land Transportation Office in Cebu in the continued smuggling of luxury cars into the country through the inland province.

Cebu, they said, now appears to be the country's smuggling capital for luxury cars after authorities tightened the noose on car importation through the Subic Bay Freeport.

Lawyer Teofilo Guadiz, head of the investigation, security and law enforcement staff of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), said car smuggling has drifted to Cebu since 2006 after the antismuggling campaign in Subic Bay Freeport became too hot to handle for smugglers.

Guadiz said their findings on the questionable issuances of car registrations indicated that technical smuggling in Cebu is already rampant.

"We saw a grand conspiracy among LTO officials and importers. There seemed to be an arrangement already within the LTO offices down-line to get around the law or bring in questionable/ luxury cars, like in the case of Toledo City and Lapu-Lapu City. There are a lot of documents that can't be explained," he said in a telephone interview yesterday.

If the records of the LTO encoder section were to be believed, Central Visayas ranked first among the 12 regions in the country with the most utility vehicles registered in 2006, surpassing Central Luzon, where the Subic Bay Freeport is located.

Data from the LTO Central Office revealed that Central Visayas has registered 36,431 new utility vehicles in 2006 while Central Luzon registered only 19,368.

The same data also showed that Central Visayas registered 3,594 new cars compared to Central Luzon with only 976.

Central Visayas came next to National Capital Region with registered 32,580 utility vehicles and 28,926 other cars.

Car smuggling in Cebu allegedly started in 2006 but it became rampant in 2007 based on findings in the recently concluded investigation, he added.

Apart from car smuggling, investigators from the DOTC also found that at least five luxury cars that were stolen in Manila had been registered in LTO-Cebu City.

Guadiz said they already asked Alex Puliga, head of the registration division of LTO Cebu City, to explain but Puliga failed to cooperate with the investigators.

Puliga is also being investigated for registering the controversial 2006 Ferrari allegedly owned by Willie Revillame that was registered on Dec. 14, 2006, based only on a photocopied certificate of payment.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales, who was in Cebu Friday, told reporters here that he had ordered the investigation because he wanted to know if there was an undercover casino at the Fuente complex owned by Revillame.

Investigators sent to Cebu by Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza to look into the questionable issuances of car registrations estimated that the government lost about P400 million in smuggling to Cebu in 2007.

Guadiz said they found several irregularities to several LTO offices in Cebu which include the abnormal increase of registrations in Toledo City from one new in 2006 to 3,986 last year; 20 misdeclared luxury cars in Lapu-Lapu City and registrations of vehicles with only photocopied import documents in Cebu City.

In Mandaue City, investigators also found out that LTO officials there issued certificates of registration even before necessary documents/ repair were issued, he added.

THE CAMPAIGN against smuggling brings officials of the Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group (PASG) to auto shops and warehouses like this one in Binondo, Manila. AFP/LYNDON

DOJ chief threatens to force out prosecutor

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—JUSTICE SECRETARY Raul Gonzalez has threatened to forcibly open the office of a defiant former Iloilo City prosecutor unless he relieved earlier after the prosecutor was ordered dismissed by Malacañang for graft.

In a one-page memorandum dated Jan. 7, Gonzalez ordered relieved Iloilo City Prosecutor Efrain Baldoga to turn over the records and evidences of cases inside his office at the Hamon G. Araneta Hall of Justice here within 48 hours after receipt of the order.

"Your continued refusal to comply with the directives from this office will leave this office with no alternative but to order the forcible opening of your office," said Gonzalez in his memorandum.

Baldoga has publicized his refusal to leave his office and has refused to recognize Sec. T. Hill memorandum of Gonzalez re-assigning him either to the Office of the Regional State Prosecutor or the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor pending the finality of a decision of the Office of the President dismissing him for graft. He has subsequently filed his six indefinite leave for health reasons.

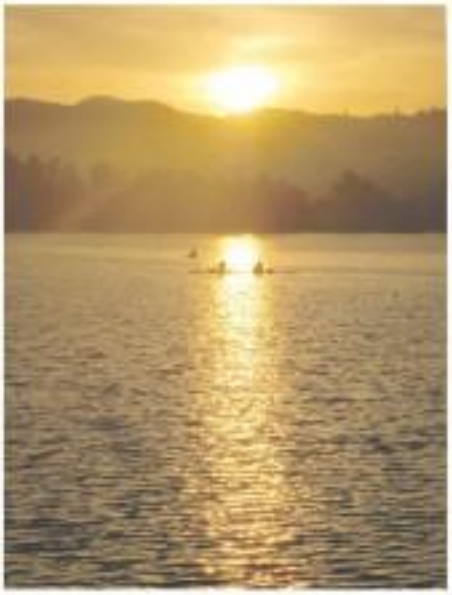
The Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) in August last year found Baldoga liable for violating Section 7 of Republic Act No. 6713, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

He was arrested from a complaint filed by retired engineer Jose Demerutalin, who accused Baldoga of asking for money in exchange for facilitating a case he had filed at the city prosecutor's office. Baldoga has repeatedly denied the accusation.

Baldoga has insisted that his re-assignment is illegal and has violated his right to security of tenure. He has refused to allow acting City Prosecutor Peter Balane to work inside his office.

Gonzalez said, in his memorandum, that his office has received complaints of users that have not been served upon or are receiving stale because they have not been turned over to Balane.

"You only have your refusal to submit these records but in the prejudice of the public, you have closed your office to the detriment of the service and the interest of many litigants," said Gonzalez.



SUNRISE
The sun makes a spectacular exit of the waters in Barangay Cave in Santiago, Ilocos Sur, as it rises in the place known as the "Boracay of the North" because of its white sand beaches.

MILF points to Puno as peace enemy in Erap, GMA Cabinets

COTABATO CITY—THE ISLAMIST Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) yesterday pointed to Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno as the antipeace member of the Cabinet who has also pushed the Estrada administration into a total war with Moro guerrillas in 2000.

Puno could not be reached for comment. His staffers said he was in a meeting.

The MILF was reacting to reports quoting Puno as saying the government should not give in to the MILF's demand for a Bangsamoro Juridical Entity (BJE) without a plebiscite.

The sticking act of the BJE was agreed upon by government and MILF negotiators during exploratory talks in Kuala Lumpur last year.

But when the agreement was to be finalized, the MILF reached out of the talks and accused the government of bad faith.

Mohagher Iqbal, MILF chief negotiator, said they were opposing the phrase "consultation process," which government negotiators inserted in the draft agreement after the exploratory talks were held.

Khaled Musa, MILF deputy chief for information, said Puno's suggestion that "the government should stop pursuing a peace agreement with the MILF if the means to achieve this objective is unconstitutional" contradicted the peace efforts of the Arroyo administration.

Musa urged Puno to resign if he was in conflict with President Macapagal-Arroyo's "all out peace policy" in Mindanao.

He said it was also Puno who has been urging the President to wage war on the MILF.

He said Puno and then Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado were among the brains of the all-out war on the MILF waged by plunderer Joseph Estrada, when he was still president in 2000.

In Davao City, Jesus Dureza, presidential adviser on the peace process, said the government is "not in any manner pre-empting the Moro rebellion through a peace agreement."

Dureza denied allegations the government is using the Moro rebellion in Mindanao to amend the Constitution.

Earlier, officials of the MILF said the government's offer of a federal state for the Moro people was being used to pursue Charter change.

Musa said the rebel group had already watered the offer in principle.

Dureza said the proposed would be limited to a federal state and any other amendments would not be supported by the government.

He said Congress could convene as a constituent assembly and limit its agenda to the proposed federal state. With reports from Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

Bolinao to sue barge owners for coal spill

BOLINAO, PANGASINAN—THE local government of this town plans to sue the owners of the Indonesian barge, which ran aground off Bay Malino village and spilled 6,373 metric tons of coal into the area in November last year.

Mayor Alfonso Celeste said the local government has not decided yet on the amount it will demand in damages from the Indonesian owners of the barge MV/L 3003. The University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UPMSI)-based here estimated the environmental damage at P54.8 million.

Bad weather

The barge was being towed by a tug boat on its way from Indonesia to the power plant in Isla Grande on Mar. 27 when strong winds and big waves caused by Typhoon "Milenyo" broke its anchor and rope.

The barge was hoisted to the reef in Dagupan. The impact destroyed its metal flat steel railing, cargo frame, spilling 95 percent of its cargo.

"We still don't know how much is demand," Celeste said. The UPMSI said its estimated amount, which includes payment for 18 years for the rehabilitation of the damaged area, was "conservative."

Celeste said the social aspect, such as the loss of fishermen's livelihood and the amount spent for the cleanup of the area, should be included in the computation.

Damaged area

The UPMSI said the coal spill spread in 33 hectares of coral and sea grass areas. It said the spillage of tons of hard coal and the damage caused by the barge had direct bearing on the life in the area.

The grounded barge, the former a "gigantic artificial mountain" to the area, it said. Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon

RESIDENTS of San Fernando, La Union, help remove coal from the shores that were spilled by the Indonesian barge in the background at the height of Typhoon "Milenyo."

Dissolve Comelec by Cha-cha —Bert G

LEGAZPI CITY—ANOTHER agenda for Charter change has emerged from Sorsogon Governor, communist security adviser, who proposed that the Comelec be axed to dissolve the Constitution on Elections.

In his visit to Bicol Thursday, Gonzales said he wants the "heavily tainted" Comelec dissolved through Charter change.

"The Comelec has become irreparable. It has to be replaced," he said in a press conference.

Gonzales came here to meet with regional directors from various agencies to discuss government corruption and cases of impunity.

He added that despite the misgivings of some critics on the idea of Charter change, he is confident that President Macapagal-Arroyo will not use it to seek an extension of term.

Gonzales said a viable option for electoral reform is through Charter change.

"We cannot abolish the Comelec now because it is a constitutional body but there is a need to replace it," he said.

The Comelec's credibility is expected to be under public scrutiny again on the 2010 presidential election as speculations heated up.

Asked on what officer could possibly take Gonzales's functions, he said he thinks the judiciary can handle the country's elections better.

He said the Comelec is one of the noxious many of those who are really seen elections and holding elective positions today.

Gonzales said the Arroyo does not share his view on electoral reforms through Cha-cha, but that the President believes Cha-cha was good for the country.

Talk of Charter change surfaced last year after information from a peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front remain stalled. Ephesians Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon

ATONEMENT CATHEDRAL

The Baguio Cathedral announced a name change by uniting up this year with the cathedral's new name as "Our Lady of the Atonement Cathedral." The cathedral has survived the American occupation of Baguio City at the end of World War II.

Bacolod preparing for new airport

By Carla P Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—HOTELS IN Bacolod City are setting up a common airport shuttle system for their guests while new public transport routes are also being discussed in preparation for the opening of the New Bacolod-Silay Airport on Jan. 18.

Passengers will also be allowed to board Bacolod City taxis hours before their flights as the new P3.6-billion airport in Silay City is 20 km away, said Arlo Lizares, president of the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Negros Occidental.

Lizares said the 58 hotels and resorts in Bacolod City planned to set up a common drop-in system that will charge P450 per person for those going to the airport and vice versa.

Hotels that will provide transportation for airport-bound passengers are planning to charge fees ranging from P400 to P500 per trip, he said, while taxi fares may charge P350.

Talks are underway for shorter routes from some malls in the city to the airport and back.

The Land Transportation and Franchising Regulatory Board has permitted Silay Mayor Jose Medardo Jalandoni with a memorandum announcing routes that would be opened for the new airport.

The new routes are Lopezville Rail, SM Bacolod, Robinsons Bacolod and Gaisano Mall in the Silay Airport and vice versa; shuttle service—Silay proper, Hacienda area, port and Bacolod plaza to the new airport and back; and coupon transport service based at the Silay airport to any point in Negros Occidental.

Tesda workers seek justice for harassment

By David Isreal Sinay
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE UNION PRESIDENT of the Technical Education, Skills and Development Authority (Tesda) has not given up her quest for justice for being dropped from the agency's payroll after the entire entire Tesda director general Augusto Syjuco Sr. in operations.

Nenita Sison, president of the Gumaborg Bisaya sa Nagkahiusang Kawsad ng Tesda, with Mitzi Buenida and Mabel Sison, filed a complaint at the Civil Service Commission (CSC) against Syjuco after he ordered their reassignment and, eventually, their removal from the Tesda payroll.

Two other Tesda employees, Conrado Manresa Jr and Ian Gabing, filed a separate complaint on the same grounds.

In a promulgation dated Aug. 28, 2007, CSC Commissioner Mary Ann Fernandez-Mendoza, with Chair Karina Constantino-David and Commissioner Cesar Buenaflor, through CSC Resolution No. 07-1097, declared invalid Syjuco's reassigning of Geron.

Absences

But the CSC also ruled to compel Syjuco's dismissal to keep Buenida and Sison from the Tesda payroll since they did not report for work either at the Tesda central office or to their new places of assignment and their absences have not been covered by permits to go on leave.

Geron filed a sick leave in December 2006 and vacation leave this month, but no action was taken on the applications for leave.

Syjuco filed a motion for reconsideration at the CSC, which has yet to rule on it.

"We hope that the [Civil Service] Commission shall have the urgency to decide on our case," Geron said in a phone interview Thursday.

Geron, with four other employees, were reassigned from the Tesda central office at the height of the corruption exposé initiated by the union against Syjuco.

No bidding

The union alleged that Syjuco and other respondents used PO 2 million in Tesda funds to publish Syjuco's book, Salabat for the Filipino Soul, and awarded the printing contract to Grand C Graphics Inc., without public bidding, area years ago.

On Oct. 16, 2006, Syjuco reassigned Geron, Buenida, Rafael Sison, Manresa and Gabing outside the Tesda central office.

Buenida was the secretary of the union; Sison was a board member; and Manresa and Gabing were former presidents of Tesda's Association of Contract Employees.

But the five refused to follow the orders of Syjuco saying these "were meant to harass, intimidate, coerce and disorient" them.

Geron and their reassignment from Tesda Central Office in Taguig, Metro Manila to the 28 regional Tesda provincial and district offices, was in retaliation for their using Syjuco for corruption.

On Oct. 31, 2006, the names of Geron, Buenida and Sison were removed from the Tesda central office payroll. Syjuco, on Nov. 6, 2006, charged Geron, Buenida and Sison with gross insubordination.

No comment

Judith Christos, CSC commission and liaison office director, refused to comment on the status of the case.

"It only needs a short time [to resolve the case]," Christos told the inquirer in a text message saying the case resolution was delayed by Syjuco's motion for reconsideration.

STUDENTS take part in the Galleons Festival in Mansaog, Pangasinan, a town that has attracted visitors to the shrine for the Our Lady of Manaoag.

Council tells ATO: Build int'l airport in Alaminos

ALAMINOS CITY—THE REgional Development Council in the Ilocos region has urged the Air Transportation Office to establish an international airport in Alaminos City "to hasten the economic gains in Northern Luzon."

Attendees to the twelfth conventional and educational center in western Pangasinan, and home to the Hundred Islands National Park, one of the region's major tourist attractions.

The council, which coordinates and sets the direction of development and assists development efforts in the province, cited the report on the increase in the arrival of local and foreign tourists in the region.

This is attributed to the continued development of tourist facilities and amenities off the Hundred Islands.

"A greater number of tourists are projected to visit the city and the surrounding tourist area if only travel to western Pangasinan is shortened to less than an hour relative to the rail, or major tourist attractions in Northern Philippines," the council said.

The council said the establishment of a regional airport in Alaminos was proposed as early as 2002 when initial discussions on its possible site were made.

Aslan Ipalo, representing Joaquin Cenzon Pa, executive director, is offering its turbo prop aircraft to Alaminos City Mayor Hernani Braganza once the airport is built.

Braganza said the Department of Transportation and Communication has already assured the city government that the P7.5 million for the feasibility study had been included in the 2008 national budget.

He said a pre-feasibility study conducted by the ATO already showed that an international airport in the city was technically and financially viable.

Gov. Amado Espino Jr is backing for the establishment of the Lingayen airstrip while the League of Mayors of Pangasinan has endorsed the establishment of the airport in Sta. Barbara town. Yolanda Quijano-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Rabies feared in 30 dog meat eaters

LEGAZPI CITY—Some 30 people from several villages in Malilipot, Albay are feared to have been infected by rabies after eating the meat of a rabid dog.

Malilipot Mayor Billy Circles said that as of Saturday morning, municipal health officials have been searching for at least 23 residents of Barangays Ilawod and Tye residents from neighboring villages who reportedly ate the dog meat that proved to be rabies infected.

Circles said in a mobile phone interview that the dog has bitten three persons already and vanished.

He suggested that the dog be slaughtered and brought to the health office for examination."

However, he said, the health officers did not know that after the head of the dog was brought to them, the villagers butchered the dog's body and ate its meat.

Circles said some of the victims were already brought to different hospitals for observation and anti-rabies vaccination although there were yet no reports on their latest condition. Ephesians Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon

NEWS

Kids learn about biofuels from senator-proponent

SEN. MIGUEL Zubiri and racer Gaby de la Merced (from right) during the Inquirer Read-Along session yesterday. NOEL ALCOY

AROUND 80 CHILDREN were introduced yesterday to Rokoy Coconut, Dondon Sagarzona and Amy Jinbropa—characters in a new story titled "Fuels for Life" which was read for the first time during the 21st Inquirer Read-Along session.

"Fuels for Life," a brainchild of the Sustainable Energy Development Program (SEDP) of the US Agency for International Development and US Department of Energy, was read by guest reader Sen. Miguel Zubiri, author of the Philippines' Biofuels Act of 2006.

The biofuels act of 2006 aims to reduce dependence on imported fuels by encouraging the development of indigenous and renewable sources like coconut for more biodiesel and sugarcane for ethanol.

Zubiri was joined by Formula 3 race car driver and Force Big Brother Celebrity Edition 23 (ABS-CBN) platoon Gaby de la Merced, as well as teachers and one student from the Sophia School of Montessori, Bulacan.

Zubiri said it was important for children to know about biofuels because "they will be the ones who will benefit from it in the future."

"The kids are also the most influential people in a household. They might influence their parents," he added.

Zubiri also introduced other renewable energy sources like sunlight and wind through a video presentation, while Jaspee Inventor of Greenpeace Southeast Asia showed the children an electric fan run by two solar panels.

Racing champion De la Merced, the first Asian female scholar in Formula BMW, said she was interested in trying out biofuels in car driving.

Dianne Arevalo, a fifth-grader at Sophia School, read the story. "Ang Batutubong Bus" by Irene G. Villanueva.

Sophia teachers Betty Datulla, Marnie Dacumpas and Jane Alvarez delighted the audience with their interpretation of "The Sky Rescue" by Rebecca T. Alburo-ey. Schairi Quesada and Kate S. Pedroso, Inquirer Research

Aplus METRO
Editor Rosvi G. Dipasupil

Faith, hope and the Wongs' free lunches in Quiapo

By Allison W. Lopez

MANY FLOCK TO SHRINES or other holy places either to say their prayers or hope for a miracle.

A Chinese-Filipino family however, shows their gratitude for the good life they live by sharing their blessings with those lacking in faith or hope during feast days, like that of the Black Nazarene.

With a banquet of fiesta staples like *lechon*, pancit, *lumpiang shanghai* and fried chicken, the Wong family—owners of the durable breakfast favorite Bakerite bread of brands and pastries—welcomed around 300 people to their cold home on E. Hidalgo and Carcer streets at noon last Wednesday.

"People can just come and go because it's fiesta time. We celebrate the feast of the Black Nazarene as our grandmother Abad, in's house," said Jeff Wong, 30, a third-generation Bakerite scion.

Wong, whose relatives have been living in Quiapo since the late 1940s when the bakery opened for business, said he and his cousins like Jay Anne Wong Abad grew up reaching the feast of the Black Nazarene every Jan. 9.

The fiesta gathers their family of about 20 annually, but is becomes bigger every time the free-for-all lunch buffet is opened to the public at 11 a.m.

"Every fiesta *nandito lahat* (Everyone is here every fiesta). It's something we can't miss," he said.

The celebration, added Abad, was indeed a form of "thanksgiving" to the Black Nazarene for all the blessings the family has received throughout the years.

"There are a lot of other families who also do this because everybody here in Quiapo really prepare for the feast. Some come from faraway places. We don't know who they are but everyone's welcome to our home every fiesta. Alam na nila (They already know)," she said.

Though the procession from Quiapo Church where thousands of barefoot devotees gather usually gets center stage, Wong revealed more aspects of the colorful fiesta such as the parade of bands and the mini art auction led by emcee Arnaiz.

"At 9 a.m. there's a parade of bands where they around the host in uniform, but [unlike] the that. There's also an art auction where gays in costumes perform around Quiapo and solicit money. Mayor yan. Supo nuwan ang kanilakuin ng apat [It's fun. Then, there are the live shows]," he said.

They may not be members of devotee groups like Abad said but fellow Quiapo, has never failed to be part of the "engagement," or those who pull the rope of the carroza (float), something he has been doing since he was 8 years old.

Catholicism is their family rite said, traditions started with her grandmother, Emilia Bendor Wong, a Filipino who married their grandfather, Wong Tong Leong (or Ng Hiau), who was of pure Chinese stock.

"My grandma used to go to Quiapo Church every day when she was still strongly. But now, due to already 80", Abad said, adding that various icons of the Black Nazarene and the Virgin Mary fill the house on Hidalgo and Carcer.

The religious's and belief in icons like the Black Nazarene recently rubbed off on them, she said. Abad, however, revealed that she was the only child—and a woman

DEVOTEE Jan. 9, the Wong family—owners of Bakerite bakery on E. Hidalgo and Carcer Streets in Quiapo, Manila, host devotees of the Black Nazarene.

JEWELRY SEMINARS
Jan. 14-25, 2008

THE FEAST day of the reverered image has become a reunion of sorts for the Wong family. The food then pile away is their way of thanking the Lord for the blessings He has given them.

Reverence and Revelry

Don't miss the three major festivals in honor of the Santo Niño

A symbol of humility and incarnation, the Santo Niño is the popular Filipino representation of the child Jesus Christ. Thousands of locals and tourists gather in Kalibo, Cebu, and Iloilo where the Ati-atihan, Sinulog, and Dinagyang festivals take place.

Ati-atihan

One of the most popular festivals in the country, the Ati-Atihan is a two-week event which involves novena masses and rosary processions for the Santo Niño, culminating in a three-day parade of merrymaking and street dancing where celebrants paint their faces with black soot and wear bright, outlandish costumes. On the last day a procession of parishioners carry bamboo torches and different images of the Santo Niño.

Sinulog 2008

Sinulog comes from a Cebuano adverb that means "like water current maneuver" which describes the motion of the Sinulog dance. The festival starts on the third Sunday of January and lasts for nine days. It is highlighted by the religious Fluvial and land procession of the Santo Niño, attended by thousands of devotees. It culminates with the Sinulog Grand Parade, Cebu's most colorful display of pomp and pageantry: participants garbed in bright-colored costumes dance to the rhythm of drums, trumpets, and native gongs.

Held on the fourth Sunday of January, the Dinagyang is Iloilo's biggest and most colorful festival. The host had its humble beginnings 48 years ago and grew to become the Philippines' 2007 Tourism Event of the Year. The Dinagyang is divided into three major events: Ati-Atihan Street Dancing, Kasadyahan Street Dancing and Ati-a Dinagyang pageant.

Witness the fusion of prayer and pageantry – join the Ati-atihan, Sinulog, and Dinagyang!

SMART TIPS

A Public Service Message from SMART

A flood-free city is all TOYM awardee Toby Tiangco wants for Navotas

NAVOTAS Mayor Toby Tiangco with his adopted couple, Tita Dominguez Young-Han and her husband Young-Han, during the awarding ceremony for the Outstanding Navotas Citizen award for community service given last year.

By Nancy C. Carvajal

WITH HIS MONEYED BACKGROUND and good looks, Navotas City Mayor Reynaldo "Toby" Tiangco could have either been a businessman or an actor. Instead, he chose to be a public servant.

"I just want to do things that I think will benefit a lot of people and do my share in any way I can," the 40-year-old Tiangco told the Inquirer.

A graduate of a management course from the Ateneo de Manila University, Tiangco was managing the family business when politics beckoned.

"My family never approved of my many love policies. Even after I won and eventually became mayor, they still urged me not to continue," he recalled with a smile.

His is the first politicians in his family and it seems it will remain that way. "But it, unless one of my relatives who are all against my being in politics would have a sudden change of heart and run for public office," Tiangco said.

For a time, there was also the lure of show business, specifically an offer to become one of movie producer Lily Monteverde's "Regal Babies" in the 1980s, along with then chorelle newcomers, Richard Gomez. "I was all informal invitations and I didn't give it much thought," he said.

Tiangco, who is serving his third term as mayor, ran for vice mayor, his first bid for public office, in 1998. He won and was appointed the city's acting mayor after an electoral protest participated in the proclamation of the winner in the race for the mayor's post.

But Cipriano "Ernie" Sandoz, whom the Commission on Elections later declared the winner, gained away in 1999. Tiangco eventually took over as mayor, a post he retained when he won in the next local poll.

"I was because I was convinced that I could make a difference for the people of Navotas City and I would be able to raise their standards of living," he said.

Hard to believe that just three years before he decided to plunge into the world of politics, Tiangco was kidnapped and freed only after his father paid a ransom. How much, his father has yet to tell him, the mayor told the Inquirer.

In the 23 days he spent with his captors, Tiangco said he learned to pray harder and to read the Bible.

"I learned that material things don't have any value. If they had killed me at that time, all my material possessions were useless. I was not so able to realize that God works in mysterious ways," he told the reporter in a previous interview when asked what he learned from his experience as a hostage victim.

Tiangco could have opted to leave the country or keep a low profile but instead, he decided that it was time for him to help improve conditions in the flood-prone city of Navotas, which was then still a town.

"My vision for the city is basic and simple: A flood-free city, a city that is cleaner, more efficient, more secure, with quality infrastructure and good living conditions for its residents," he said.

Navotas is situated on a narrow strip of land along the eastern shores of Metro Bay. Its location makes it prone to flooding especially during the rainy season and at high tide.

As a solution to the problem that had somehow stalled the city's progress, Tiangco established the Interbarangay Pumping Station in 2003.

The project has since radically reduced flooding in Navotas from 60 percent to 2.7 percent, according to him. In 2001, 2003 and 2004, Navotas was chosen as the greenest municipality in Metro Manila. Last year, it finally received cityhood status.

For his achievements, Tiangco was named as one of last year's The Outstanding Young Men for community service. Apart from the distinction attached to the award itself, Tiangco said being a TOYM awardee has given him satisfaction and for his family, pride in his being a politician.

"I think I was on the right track when my family told me they were proud of me," he said.

TIANGCO, a former kidnap victim, says he read the Bible while in captivity.

Faith, hope and the Wongs' free ...

To page A-11

A CADRE OF BIBLE attendants distributes fans while waiting for the Black Nazarene procession to begin.

Aga and Jollibee celebrate Christmas with kids

Helping spearhead the Mulya ang Piso sa Jollibee campaign for the past 13 years, multi-awarded actor and beauty titan Aga Muhlach once again served hope to tinkle the hearts of Filipino children. At Sta. Isabel College recently, more than 300 kids under the care of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) giggled and laughed their way through fun games and other special activities as Aga and Jollibee treated them to a special Christmas treat and distributed toys and books.

Greeted by colorful balloons, lively music from percussion group Magsita, and comedian host Gabe Mercado, the kids quickly took part in the native Filipino games and took home prizes from Jollibee. After playing pulgasi, patintero, patibin, a relay race, other games, and having their faces painted, they were entertained by a bubble show and a dance number from the Jollibee mascots.

Since 1995, Mulya ang Piso sa Jollibee has been collecting toys and books from generous Jollibee customers and distributing them to less fortunate kids. The drive culminates in a grand Christmas party that has become, for these children, a much-awaited event. To date, the drive has distributed more than 1.5 million toys and books in as many children and has inspired other groups to do the same.

Also speaking for his fast-food partner, Aga expressed happiness at seeing the children take time out to just be kids and clearly enjoying themselves.

"Kahit isang linggo lang sa isang taon ang mga magsita, nagpapasaya sila dahil napapanood pa rin namin sa mga malls," said Aga, who also is in Jollibee's ads. "Ang saya na di ko pa nakakagawa ng ganito kalaki sa ganito kadaming bata."

Gold Tantoco, the new Jollibee vice president for corporate marketing, thanked Aga for his unwavering support for the program.

"Aga really takes time off his busy schedule to just spend a day with these kids. He is truly a pillar of this project," she shared.

As a father himself, Aga knows how important it is to build a solid emotional foundation for kids to grow up with a positive outlook in life. If the success of these present drive any indication, Aga's program with Jollibee will continue to make a difference in the lives of more children for many years to come.

Aga Muhlach welcomes the kids to the Mulya ang Piso sa Jollibee Christmas bash.

The smiles never stop with Mulya ang Piso sa Jollibee.

New Jollibee VP for corporate marketing Gold Tantoco says kids is the kids' main priority.

Aga and Jollibee sharing Christmas cheer with kids through toys and books.

Jollibee Foundation launches Busog. Lusog. Talino. program in public elementary schools

The Jollibee Foods Corporation (JFC) in cooperation with its social responsibility arm, the Jollibee Foundation (JF), recently launched the Busog. Lusog. Talino. (BLT) program in a number of public elementary schools. The program that aims to help address the hunger, health, and education issues faced by underprivileged children. By first providing a sustainable means of nourishment, the foundation hopes to empower these usual well-being of students to help pursue higher class attendance and lower drop-out rates. It also aims to provide the parents and the schools with the opportunity to "invest" more on how to sustain the feeding both at school and at home.

Partnering with the Jollibee Foundation for the rollout of the BLT program are the G7-70 Campaign of the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF) and the municipality of Rizal. Combining the capital and center of education in the province of Kalinga, Rizal has been the school academic achievement rates declining to 53 percent in school year (SY) 2006-2007.

Grade 1 and 2 students in Bawtistang, Nueva Segovia get balanced meals from Jollibee Foundation's Busog. Lusog. Talino. (BLT) program.

Bawtistang is on the verge of losing its most important asset-human resources. Relying heavily on academe and government services, the Bawtistang economy still gradually but steadily loses pupils' services continues to drop, an alarming consideration for Mayor John Ramirez Reguiam.

"The poor academic performance of some to-be-employees and students of higher education greatly undermines the future employabilities of our municipality... It is imperative to immediately address this concern, otherwise, Bawtistang might literally be left behind," he says.

"After studying the many needs of the underprivileged Filipino child, we opted to identify and help support their BLT. We are not expertise in food to help address the hunger and consequently school retention-related issues if not grades 1 and 2 public school students," explained Jollibee Foundation President Grace Tan Caktiong. "Our approach of implementing the program in public elementary schools that are ready to embrace the program and support the G7-70 Campaign will help ensure that the program objectives will be fulfilled. More than its school feeding, our program aims to help create collaborations among farmers, families, corporations and schools working together for the greater good of their communities, a mission which both the Jollibee Foods Corporation and the Jollibee Foundation espouse."

The collaboration effort is in keeping with the spirit behind the G7-70 Campaign, a private sector effort to complete the current revitalization efforts of Rizal to its renowned Bawtistang in one of the pilot sites of the Campaign and the town's readiness to take on this task on due largely to its experience in the Regional Search for Excellence. Since 2006, the Jollibee Foundation and MM Pizzo Energy Center for Bridging Societal Divides have been training community leaders to create a governance process and structure responsive to the needs of the citizens, leading to a better quality of life.

More than 200 children from seven elementary schools in Bawtistang, Nueva Segovia will be the first to reap the full benefits of BLT. For six months, Jollibee Foundation will have nutritious meals and nutrition parents with the help of St. Mary's University, to provide food that is nutritious, appetizing, and affordable. Barangay officials are also helping out by cooking meals in main school and will supplement the feeding program with its own funds. To track their progress, the students will also be weighed periodically.

BLT was successfully piloted by Jollibee Foundation in MLQ Elementary school in Tondo with technical assistance from Pateros Kalaki Foundation. With the local Department of Education, the local government of Bawtistang, St. Mary's University and the 7 elementary schools of Bawtistang, it is expected to yield the same good result. Jollibee Foundation will continue to enhance and expand the program in collaboration with the G7-70 Campaign to public elementary schools in other municipalities.

Jollibee Foundation's in-school feeding program teaches parents how to prepare healthy, affordable, and tasty meals.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 2008

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Gerry Lirio

"I'VE been enlightened by the experience I'm living—Caregiver. 'Singing library' means something more to me now. They've taught me blood, meat and fruits. I enjoy that friends' lectures and pairing jokes for all right now, always."

—SHARON CUNETA, January 2008

Kababayan_global_pinoy@inquirer.com.ph

Read us your feedback!

This section is dedicated to Filipinos working on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world. And to whatever work can be motivated to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

DOMESTIC FRONT IN HK

'They treated us like commodities'

By Shiela Mae

THERE IS A POPULAR JOKE AMONG FILIPINO domestic workers in Hong Kong and author Nicole Constable retells it in her book, "Maid to Order in Hong Kong (2007)." A Filipina domestic helper arrives in Hong Kong at the home of her new employers who says to her, "We want to treat you as a member of the family."

The domestic helper is happy to hear this, but on Sunday her employer says to her, "You must work before you leave the house and you must come home in time to cook dinner for the family."

"But sir, ma'am, I would like to eat with my friends today because it is my day off," says the helper.

"But you are a member of the family" says her employer, "and because you are members of the family you must eat with us."

Just like family

In Hong Kong, as in other parts of the world, domestic workers often express a desire to be treated "like one of the family." Many are of course referring to the way they are treated by their own families in the Philippines, and not, as the joke implies, in the exploitative sense.

Constable, a professor of anthropology and associate dean of graduate studies, made the speech at the University of Virginia, has treated foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong like her family, employed in some of the maids' employers who continue to treat them like commodities. If found. Professor Cruel: they know their rights), they are exchanged for better models (read: more docile).

Yes, they are the subject of her research and her 282-page book.

Constable, who had long resided in Hong Kong with their husband, 1993 and 1994, for the first edition of her book published in 1997, and then again between 2004 and 2005, for the book's second edition, published late 2007 by Cornell University Press.

The dream

Constable saw them as people and listened to their stories, why they came to Hong Kong (to escape poverty), what they left behind (their children), and their employers (being asked not to talk too much to her), and their dreams (to escape poverty).

In 1995, the Hong Kong Department of Labour and Immigration estimated that some 150,000 foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong. Of this number, 130,000 were Filipinos. Not this reason, the bulk of Constable's interviews were with Filipinos.

Constable created a flat based two basic from a Filipina

Agence France-Presse

shelters like hers are at the Central District, in particular, Statue Square, where Filipino maids would congregate on Sundays. She had long conversations with hers, but Filipino maid who came with her.

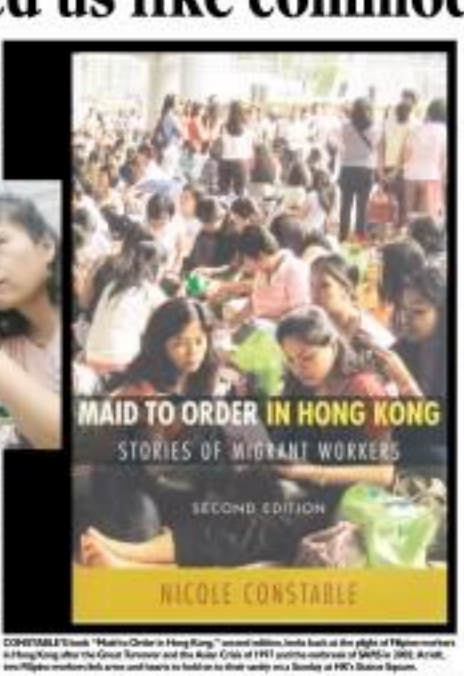
Riveting stories

In her preface to the book's first edition, Constable wrote: "This book is an ethnographic and historical account of the lives of Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong. It is about the forms of control or discipline that Filipino domestic workers experience in their dealings of recruitment and placement agencies in the Philippines and Hong Kong, with employers and with government bureaucracy, rules and regulations. It's also about the complexity of ways that foreign domestic workers respond to such discipline."

In the second edition, Constable re-visits Hong Kong, mainly to see the effects of three major events: Hong Kong's reunification with mainland China in 1997, the Asian financial crisis of the late '90s, and the outbreak of SARS in 2002 and 2003.

"The stories that Filipino and Indonesian residents of the shelters told me about their conflicts with employers, physical abuse and unemployment and homesickness and loneliness were strikingly familiar to the stories I had heard a decade earlier," writes Constable.

Despite the book's subsidiary approach, I did find parts of the book



CONSTABLE'S book "Maid to Order in Hong Kong," second edition, looks back at the plight of Filipino workers in Hong Kong after the Great Turnover and the Asian Crisis of 1997 and the outbreak of SARS in 2002. At left, two Filipino workers look across and toward to hold on to their sanity on a Sunday at HK's Statue Square.

riveting, in particular, the stories told first-hand by Filipino domestic helpers.

A Filipina maid complained that she was made to iron clothes and dress wash clothes. She said this had caused the veins in her hands to bulge. "In the Philippines, we iron in the afternoon, we never even take a bath or wash our hands, our parents would get angry at us because we can't get ready. rheumatism, arthritis."

Locked in

Another helper narrated that her employer did not give her enough food and gave her overnight train and leftovers that no one else wanted. She slept in a storeroom that did not even have an electric fan but her employer had an electric fan for the dogs.

One maid's account was like a scene from the movie "Saint" where Vilma Santos, who plays the role of a long-suffering domestic helper in Hong Kong, is locked to her employer's flat for weeks, not being able to go out or make a call even when a person dies.

Changes

Constable wrote: "In the most extreme but not uncommon cases, domestic workers may be locked inside the flat or in a room of the house. I met several workers who were locked inside the flat (without a key) whenever their employers went out. One worker told me of her friend who was locked in the flat for several weeks while her employer was on vacation. Her friend had to pass her food through the spaces in the locked metal gate."

There were important changes that Constable included in the book's second edition.

In the 1990s, there were over 300,000 Filipinos and just a handful of Indonesians. In 2006, there were 130,000 Indonesians, 125,000 Filipinos and the rest are from Thailand, India, Sri Lanka, etc. While the Filipinos still gather at Statue Square, the Indonesians have found a home away from home at Victoria Park.

The minimum wages for foreign domestic workers also made a dent especially after the Asian crisis.

More activism

Constable also noticed there was more activism among the foreign domestic workers. They no longer suffered quietly. They went to shelters and reported abuses. They even asserted their rights by unmasking perpetrators and this was true of all nationalities, not just Filipinos.

"Filipino domestic worker activists have closely influenced nationalities of workers in Hong Kong," Constable wrote.

How to get Jollibee franchise

By Bel Solares
Contributor

OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKers all over the world now have a chance to own or co-own big or small franchised businesses, through payment schemes and acquisition terms that are very friendly to them.

Leo Hernandez, a management consultant, business school lecturer and corporate divestiture, has come up with an innovative program that would enable OFWs to become part-owners of leading fast food franchises, by investing any amount that they could afford. Hernandez said the key to the success of the program is the cooperative approach, because it is the only way of opening the opportunity to small investors while at the same time preserving their investments with ownership entitlement.

As an initial goal, Hernandez is now negotiating the first cooperative that would buy a Jollibee franchise located in Metro Manila. Hernandez said that the franchise is open to cost millions of pesos, but "there is nothing that the OFWs could not afford to buy if they would just put their money together, unload and buy-sale."

Citing some figures, Hernandez said that 300 OFWs investing $1,000 each could already generate close to P5 million. He said that this would have a multiplier effect according to him, there is around 10 times more that the money given by the owner-depositors.

Hernandez also said that being a part-owner of a Jollibee franchise is definitely a better and safer investment compared to owning a toyo-an (sari), which is the usual dreams of returning OFWs who come home without an investment plan. "Prior to becoming investors in co-operatives, the ability to channel their hard-earned money into investments that have more chances of winning and therefore with lesser chances of failure," Hernandez added.

E-mail Hernandez at leoserv@yahoo.com.

Filipino immigrants and the US presidential elections

VERA BYELSHEVA, A SECOND-generation Filipino immigrant and a political consultant in Washington DC, wants to see an organized Filipino community making a difference in US elections. At present, she is in Las Vegas, Nevada mobilizing growing Filipino population and the Asian Pacific Islander to participate in the caucus that will be held in a couple of weeks.

Engaging in politics

"It has been a challenging task on my part as a Filipino to engage my community, especially the youth, to participate and vote in the political process," Byelsheva said during a meeting with Filipino American advocates for voter awareness events. "Unless Filipinos can show that they have the power of the vote, it may also be difficult to advocate for a particular issue."

She said that one of the difficulties she witnessed in the campaign to pass the Filipino Veterans Equity bill in US Congress.

In the upcoming November 2008 presidential election, the candidates are wooing votes of immigrants. Even the Bush administration is aware that the Hispanic and other immigrant voter will make a difference in the election and that one of the central issues in influencing waves of the people is immigration.

There are several organizations that are engaged in educational workshops and conducting activities intended to register voters. One of these organizations is API Vote which Byelsheva is a member of the board. They have tried to reach out to 1.5 million or registers and vote in the coming elections.

In conducting their educational "go out and vote" activities, one of the complaints that they hear is that most of the immigrants are still awaiting for

their naturalization applications to be adjudicated. Unless those applications are adjudicated, these new immigrants may not be able to naturalize in time for the election.

Delay in naturalization

Last year, the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) decided to increase its filing fees. One of these is the application for naturalization to US citizenship. It was raised from $675 to $675.

As a result of the announcement of the increase in fees, there was a surge in the naturalization applications with the USCIS. It was reported that there are more than one million applications for naturalization that are pending right now. Recently, an application for naturalization takes only six months before it is adjudicated.

Now, the USCIS announced that there will be 18 to 19 months of delay before all these applications, filed in June 2007 onwards, are finally adjudicated. This means that there are one million applications will be naturalized after the November 2008 presidential election.

These one million applicants include a significant number of Filipino applicants who had been permanent residents (PR-120

The WORLD

Edita Laurente B. Guico

US acts to cut delay in gaining citizenship

FEDERAL OFFICIALS SAID FRIDAY THAT THEY HAD agreed on an emergency plan to hire back about 700 retired government employees in an effort to pare an immense backlog in applications for citizenship by legal immigrants.

Under the plan, first proposed by Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., retired workers could return to the Federal Citizenship and Immigration Services agency without unwinding any part of their pensions. The agency will be authorized to hire former employees who have been away since passed training programs and could be on the job quickly to help handle the more than one million citizenship applications filed in the first 10 months of last year, Schumer said.

The required waiver was approved in a letter on Thursday to immigration officials from Linda M. Springer, the director of the Office of Personnel Management.

The rehiring program is one step to help the immigration agency overcome an embarrassing backlog. Legal immigrants, saying their wait spurred by a fee increase that took effect July 30, 2007, said by secrets raised in the Democratic political debate over immigration, applied in huge numbers last summer to become citizens. They were stoked by a nationwide drive led by Hispanic groups and Univision, the Spanish-language television network.

According to its website, the immigration agency is projecting that it could take up to 18 months to process citizenship applications received after June 1. Hispanic groups have protested that hundreds of thousands of applicants would be unable to vote in the presidential election. "It's a problem of their own making," William Stanton, director of the Washington office of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund, said of the agency. "We kept telling them, there's going to be a surge."

In recent days, the immigration agency confirmed that it received 1,326,192 citizenship applications from last January to October, nearly double the number in that period in 2006.

The agency also received a deluge of other immigration petitions.

Hispanic groups have demanded that the agency complete by July 4 the naturalizations of all immigrants who applied in the 2007 fiscal year, which ended Sept. 30, Bennett said.

Normally, when retired federal employees return to work, their salaries are reduced by the amount of their pension payments. Under the new waiver, retired workers who return to the immigration agency will receive full salary as well as their regular pension payments. AFP

GET UNLIMITED TALK TIME FOR P699 A MONTH.

Say everything you've ever wanted to.

Make **unlimited** landline calls within the same area code. And **unlimited** calls and texts to all Bayan subscribers nationwide for only P699 a month. Also enjoy low PLDT and IDD rates, text messaging and Internet access up to 1Mb kbps. So don't hold back. Call **(02) 467 3000** now.

bayan wireless landline

WORLD BRIEFS

Clinton upstages GOPs with US stimulus plan

CLINTON

LOS ANGELES—US presidential contender Hillary Clinton on Friday proposed $150 billion in emergency spending to stave off a possible US election-year recession, upstaging Republican rivals who clinched over the economy but offered few specifics. The New York senator, who hopes to become the Democratic nominee in the November election, proposed $30 billion to help low-income families hit by the mortgage crisis and $120 billion in other spending, mainly for the poor and unemployed. The former first lady, trying to build momentum after her narrow New Hampshire primary victory over Illinois Sen. Barack Obama, also urged Congress to prepare an additional $40 billion in tax rebates for low- and middle-income families to be implemented if the initial stimulus fails. Clinton released her economic proposals amid warnings that a recession is increasingly likely. Reuters

Pakistan warns US on unilateral attacks

WASHINGTON—President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan warned in an interview published Friday that any unilateral attack by the United States against al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters in his country's tribal areas would be treated as an invasion. But Musharraf also left open the possibility of American and Pakistani forces working together in broader counterterrorism. In full or captured remix: Qaeda leaders nationwide, be holding on the rugged border area see Afghanistan. "You're talking about Osama bin Laden; any action against him will be fine, then we where he is, if we have good intelligence," Musharraf told The Straits Times of Singapore. "The methodology of getting him and his lieutenants together, you've to attack the ranged together." Asked in the interview about a proposal to enter Iraq by President Bush's senior national security advisers to expand the authority of the CIA and the military to conduct terrorism-aggression covert operations in the Middle East, Musharraf said he would oppose the conduct of unilateral strikes by American forces without Pakistani approval. "Nobody will come here and let ask them to come, and we'll make them," Musharraf said. AFP

US-Iran naval incident gets murkier

WASHINGTON—American sounds and videos of an incident between Iranian and US military boats have raised confusion over the gravity of the crucial encounter and exactly what happened in the Gulf's Strait of Hormuz. The Jan. 6 incident took place before President George W. Bush left on a Middle East tour, raising already high tensions between Washington and Tehran as the US government lodged a formal protest on Thursday. The US Defense Department also released Friday that Iranian speedboats interfered with the passage of US warships in Hormuz on two other occasions in December. The department, meanwhile, released an unedited 30-minute videotape of the Jan. 6 incident following Iranian charges that it had taken an earlier edited version that showed Iranian speedboats carrying several US sailors. The 30 minutes released Friday included the material contained in the earlier version, plus extended and longer, unedited footage of Iranian boats following the US ships at some distance. AFP

O.J. Simpson accused of violating bail, is jailed

SIMPSON

LAS VEGAS—O.J. Simpson returned to jail, where he will spend several days before a judge hears allegations that the former football star violated terms of his bail in an armed-robbery case here, officials said. Simpson, 60, arrived in Las Vegas Friday on a commercial flight from Florida. He was taken in handcuffs by a police escort to the Clark County Detention Center, where he is being held pending a bail hearing. AP

Sunday SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molmisa Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

■ Celtics get back on track /A25

ALASKA'S Sonny Thoss (left) and Patrick Ildefonso battle for position during a rebound play in their game Friday night. The Aces defeated the Giants, 109-102.

■ Thailand finally invites RP to Olympic qualifier /A24

■ Jones given 6-month jail sentence for dope, fraud /A25

United Auctioneers, Inc.
JAN. 22, 23 & 24, 2008
(TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY)
ALL ITEMS WILL BE PARADED ON AUCTION DAY
NO RESERVE POLICY
INSPECTION DATES: JAN. 19, 20 & 21, 2008
TADANO TR150 ROUGH TERRAIN CRANE
BLDG. 2400 ARGONAUT HIGHWAY, SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE, PHILIPPINES
TEL. NOS. (047) 252-3338 • 252-1145 TO 38 • (02) 820-0850
(02) 710-5270 • CEL NOS. (0917) 7063834 • (0917) 8187000
FAX: (047) 252-3305 EMAIL: sal@uauctioneers.net WEB: www.uauctioneers.net

Hot Realtors eye semis slot

ST. LUCIA HAS RARELY FOUND ITSELF in a situation like this.

In fact, it is usually around this point of almost every PBA conference in the past that the Realtors would be reduced to praying for their fates to improve, that by a stroke of luck they advance to the playoffs through someone else's doing.

But a difference a couple of wayward dumper have made. The Realtors tangle with Air21 with an eye cast toward the No. 1 seed Rain or Shine in the Philippine Cup.

Armed with hyperactive rookie Ilyan Pearce and sophomore sophomore Kelly Williams, the Realtors will go into that match at the Araneta Coliseum holding the fate of the Alaska Aces in their hands.

"I am confident that we can get past Air21," coach Boyet Fernandez told The Inquirer over the phone. "Of course there is pressure on our part, because they [Air21 players] will be playing with nothing to lose at all.

"But I already told the players during practice that we just have to enjoy our-

VERTAS

LACK OF QUORUM

Hontiveros stays on as bowling big boss

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CDO

THE PHILIPPINE BOWLING Congress (PBC) failed to come up with a quorum needed for a snap election and ended up where it started—with incumbent president Steve Hontiveros still at the helm of the association.

The annual meeting, held at the Green Valley in Silang City, ended abruptly with only 38 of the 26 board members showing up, not enough to convene the general assembly.

The general assembly was supposed to be held right after the board meeting, according to Hontiveros.

But a defiant Hontiveros showed he was unperturbed by the challenge to his leadership, setting another date for a general assembly on Jan. 20. There, he hopes that whoever is behind the move to oust him will finally come out in the open and muster the numbers needed to call a snap election.

"I don't need this position, I'm only here to help," Hontiveros told the Inquirer. "But if there's someone willing to take my place then he or she should step up to front."

And no one seems to be stepping up to the plate.

PBC secretary general and Makati Pamet Bong Coo, earlier fingered by sources as the one seeking for a leadership change, threw her full support behind Hontiveros as she thwarted the rumors linking her with the plot to oust the PBC president.

Coo attended the meeting along with PBC vice president Anne Medrano, another personality tagged as being behind the move to replace Hontiveros.

In an email sent to the Inquirer, Coo reiterated that "I truly trust his [Hontiveros'] leadership and that he will do his best to bring back bowling as a medal sport."

"I do not want my president to lose his confidence in me as the PBC secretary general," wrote Coo. "Not unlike other NSAs, the PBC has its own share of problems and issues that it faces and needs to resolve."

She added that election was not in the agenda. Hontiveros' term ends next January.

Hontiveros said the clubs from the provinces, including Iloilo, Bacolod, Davao and Cebu failed to make it. There were only 69 clubs, 11 short of the required number to effect a snap election.

Derby One Pocket: Django 3rd

FORMER WORLD NO. 1 FRANCISCO "Django" Bustamante bowed to Larry Nevel in the semifinals and settled for third place in the 10-ball event of the 10th annual Derby City Classic Saturday at the Executive West Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky.

Bustamante rather beat Mariano Bautista in the 10th round then eliminated compatriot Rico Pagulayan in the 12th.

Nevel emerged a winner with Gabe Owen for the one pocket crown.

Owen, a former US Open 9-ball titlist best. Nevel in the tenth, seeded fastest four-time one pocket crown winner Efren "Bata" Reyes in the 12th and took a free in the 13th to gain the final.

Bustamante also finished third to last year's one pocket and 9-ball division to send up third in the Master of the Table bonus race, where Reyes and Rodolfo "Dr. Jaimon" Luat landed 1-2, respectively.

Bustamante boomed back in the ongoing 9-ball event by posting four straight wins over Norman Mc Whitby, Josh Roberts, Corrine Deluze and former world pool champion Mika Immonen of Finland. He will face Gui Antonio in the ninth round.

Reyes, Luat, Pagulayan and Guillermo Jaime "Rising" Parico are also in contention in the 9-ball event.

Parico takes on James Bianka, Reyes goes up against Geronimo Jelado, Luat battles Shane Mc Minn and Pagulayan tackles John Brumback in the ninth round.

Reyes topped Mark Burns, Thomas Miller, Corey Deuel and Landon Shuffett from round 2 to 5, while Luat smashed John Smith, Dennis Hennigner, Joseph Elisha and Tom Spencer.

Pagulayan, on the other hand, crushed Jeorge Bi Landman, Chuck Gregg, Bobby Mc Grath and Rahul Shaimeen.

Parico bowed to Shuffett but 3rd round-bounced against Leon Glatt, Freddie Boggs and Jake Brumback.

James Bambajan became the lone Filipino casualty when he bowed to former US Open 9-ball winner Corey Deuel in the third round and to Deuel Dominguez in the fourth.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Pacquiao still best bet

FILIPINO RING ICON MANNY PACquiao remains as the boxing bettors' choice over Mexican warrior Juan Manuel Marquez.

The current line for Pacquiao-Marquez is 6-5/8-to-5 '13 in Las Vegas, according to John Discenza of Boomtown Confidential, puts the 29-year old Pacman ahead of the -175 mark with the 34-year-old "Dinamita" at +155.

It means a $175 bet on Pacquiao will return just $100 while a $100 bet on Marquez will generate $155.

"What the betting line is now (skewed for the wiser bred that took four years to materialized. Pacquiao was tagged a slight favorite at -140 over Marquez, who opened at +115.

According to analysts, the slight movement in the betting odds may be a sign that Pacquiao bettors aren't taking the Mexican counter-puncher lightly in the megabuck fight for the world super featherweight championship.

It could also mean that Mexican fight fans have unloaded some greenbacks to avert lofty odds for Pacquiao, who sent Marquez to the canvas three times before settling for a controversial draw in their first showdown.

Another probable reason is present axis. Pacquiao's failure to knock out Mexican Marco Antonio Barrera, whom Marquez also fared, and Cotto bit.

Roy Luarca

OLYMPIC QUALIFIER

Thailand finally welcomes RP

By Mars Anthony Bayan

REGARDING THE POSSIBLE INCIDENT as a case of "misunderstanding," the Amateur Boxing Association of Thailand (Abat) yesterday declared it will accommodate the Philippines in the Asian Olympic qualifying event, a day after the international boxing federation told them to do so.

In an interview, Abat president Gen. Sawang Jintawej even blamed the Thai press after its newspapers The Nation and the Bangkok Post said early in the week the Philippines failed to meet the deadline for entries and a visa disqualified from the event.

"I can accept the Philippine team; it's no problem," Jintawej was quoted as saying. "The Thai press misunderstood the case. They said I slapped the Philippine team from competing. That is not true."

However, Jintawej said he will check if there rooms left to accommodate the RP team), one of the heightened hopes for a first-ever Philippine Olympic gold medal, in the Jan. 25 to Feb. 2 event that dangles slots in the Beijing Games in August.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL. The controversy that erupted after a walkout protest by the Philippines in the SEA Games—which was blamed on alleged cheating in the women's finals that denied Olympian Mia Ali Ilio Angeli (right, walking away) a fair shot at gold medals—finally comes to an end after Thailand officially invited the country to the Olympic qualifier to be held in Bangkok. Here all the RP boxing squad has to do is knock themselves bobo! Rooms. Reyes/CO

"I said okay I will accept the Philippine team but I will check the rooms for the team because there are too many people coming," he said.

The country is sending six boxers in Thailand, hoping to increase the number of Olympian bouters after only Harry Tabamo made it to the World qualifying.

The busty pension was also quoted as saying that donations' flowing Association of the Philippines (Abap) president Manny Lopez "misunderstood" the situation.

"Manny Lopez you come to Thailand, no problem," said the Thai. "This is good for every country not only the Philippines but for our friendly country also."

SPORTSWATCH

Butter and Cookie league tips off

THE FIRST SEE-TO-MANILA (MANSTALL) CONFERENCE (MMBC) Butter and Cookie Cup meets off this afternoon with Erasers participating at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. Opening ceremony is at 1 p.m. while the games follow immediately starting at 1:30 p.m. Teams will play single round robin format with the top four squads advancing to the Wednesday semifinals. Action continues (within) and to the finals. The participating teams according to former MBA Technical Committee member Dario Sarte, who is the league's commissioner, are the UST Tigers, PCU Manalaysang, St. Joseph College-QC, Pacific Magic Illusion Inc., AF Senior College, UCC Zyndram and LBC Digitrel.

ALL FOR MANGO TEE. The Mango Tee one-tee-one-guest golf tournament of the Alabang Country Club, Inc. kicks off Feb. 4 and (from left) ACCI president Joe Quimbo, Filipinas Shell president Ed Chua, Julia Carvalho of Asian Infinity, Citimasters president Paul Ching and Cebu Consolidated, Mango Tee-coordinator chair are joining hands in concern a hands-free tournament that has Filipinas Shell and Smart as co-presenters and Citimasters/Mitsubishi as hole-in-one sponsor.

Makati derby weigh-in set

ENTRIES FOR THE BIGGEST ON THE MORNING THE 5-COCK DERBY of the Makati Coliseum tomorrow must be submitted for weigh-in today, head Lito Cinthua announced. Entries will be accepted from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. only. Participants may call 8963041, 4084835 and 8884475 for details. Meanwhile, the MTJ Sports and Entertainment Corp. announced yesterday the staging of 2008 Makati Invitational 5-Cock Super Derby on Feb. 3, 4 and 5. Last year's defending champion owner Jun Pascual of Laguna (fronting) and Sam Mendoza and Ricky Valencia of Pilot (standing)

Hot Realtors eye semis

From page A21

selves. That we don't have to pressure ourselves."

Pressure will actually come from the outside.

Ille Alaska will be keeping "one eye" on Cebu, which crushed NCBA in elimination with the Express, as the Aces could benefit greatly from Ica, Lucia's loss.

A victory by AKIT pushes Ica, Lucia and Manila into a 40 game for the right to join Pasig-Pateros in the semifinals.

However, it win by the Realtors would clear the door on Alaska and relegate the loser to the quarterfinal round.

Red Bull also formed part of the automatic semifinal race because, in the event of a tight tie, the Bandera would lose out to the quotient.

"It's one of those things where you don't have control over," Cone said after a 109-102 victory over the Tender Juicy Giants Friday night. "We'll keep one eye on it. (If AKIT gains), but we will not run all our hopes on it."

He even pointed out why.

"The last time we needed a team to win for us, was Coke (Coca Cola) to beat Ilocandia two (years ago)," Cone narrated. "And (ex. Lucia lost them (Tigers) by 30 at halftime. They (Tigers) lost that game by 47 points, so we don't expect much (to game tomorrow)."

Fernandez, the former guard who was part of Ica, Lucia's heroic games in the league earlier in the decade, has transformed this team from a whipping boy into one of the most formidable in the tournament.

Their seven-game win list leaves one of the longest in recent memory, coming in a hotnamente where so many powerhouse teams are struggling.

"I was part and parcel of that," Fernandez said. "It was like, every December (when tournaments ended in the past) that we (as players) were looking at an early vacation or if we could get lucky in some way.

"Now, even management doesn't look at the bottom of the standings anymore," added the former playmaker.

Meanwhile, Talk 'N Text vows to stay on track of making the quarterfinals unconditionally when it clashes with defending champion Barangay Ginebra in the 6:30 p.m. game.

Rhacoty E. Castillo

STANDINGS	W	L
Pasig-Pateros	12	6
Ica, Lucia	11	6
Manila	11	7
Red Bull	11	7
Magnolia	10	8
Talk 'N Text	9	8
Cebu	9	8
AKIT	8	10
Ginebra	6	11
Ille Alaska	5	12

TODAY'S GAME
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:30 p.m. — AKIT vs Ica, Lucia
6:30 p.m. — Barangay Ginebra vs Talk 'N Text

Classic cars race up today

LUXURY CLASSIC CARS HEAT UP THE track scene in the Classic Car Tune-Up race this weekend at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Multi Games will host the race of 71 drivers, about the 1971 Opel GT. Also joining are Daniel Kaufmann (1970 Ford Fastest), Sonny Miranda (1970 Mini Cooper), Willy Ong (1981 Alpha Romeo), Spencer Yu (1970 Opel Manta), John Pedro (1967 Hurricane 1600), Peter Nolan and Marc Abbas (1967 Porsche 912), Rony Yao (1965 Porsche 911), and Brian and Joey Gapuzan (1976 Mini Cooper).

The race is just one of the side events of Races 7 and 8 of the Asian Formula Series, together with the Philippine Grand Touring (GT) Car Championship and the Philippine Underbone Racing Series.

For details, log on to www.batangasracing.com.ph.com or call 4572241, 7270380 or 4161143 (fax).

IRON MAN. ARNOLD Aquino passes four lady swimmers participants of the race.

'Wild Man' transforms into Iron Man

ARNOLD "WILD MAN" SQUIDO negotiated 1,200 kilometers around Northern Luzon in 16 hours and 37 minutes non-stop to complete the BMW Owners Society of Indonesia (Bmoi) Iron Man Challenge recently.

And Aquino did it despite using a dual sport enduro bike against close to 90 sports and touring big bikes.

The back-breaking endurance race brought the participants from Quezon City via NLEX, to Sta. Rita, Pluridel, Cabanatuan, Bayombong, Sagan, Tuguegarao, all the way to Pagudpud, Laoag, Vigan, San Fernando, up to Baguio and down to Clark in Angeles City.

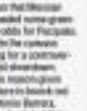
"I'm basically an enduro off road rider but I was instantly tempted by the idea of riding almost non-stop for 1,200 kilometers when I learned about it only five days before the challenge," said Aquino.

"Loaded only with determination and a bit of idiocy, I knew I can finish it," added Aquino, who was supported by Ollie Blazo, Ollie Blazo, DelBros, KTM Arroyo, Norwood Jay sports and Sat Wildman Products.

Aquino added: "My biggest problem was the bikes' lousy stock headlights. I was literally moving blind in the dark but I readily noticed it by navigating some riders going the same pace as I was."

Among the notable finishers in the race were Joey Almeda, Roy Belaluna and Regbie Romero of Club 2000.

Anyone know Pacman's mystery girl in green?



Beth Celis

FOR THE HELL of the rest of the entire country that includes me—I just managed some people known to be hosting Manny Pacquiao in an effort to identify the girl in green he was kissing in that now controversial end of interview opened photos.

I texted about 5 people but the response I got were all negative.

Not that they were covering up for the recently dubbed "Pacmanning Crackling," they just really didn't know who she is.

My impression is that the photo of Manny kissing a girl on the lips was no big deal to his friends. Nobody even knows where or when the shot was taken.

* * *

I thought I'd get an answer to my query when my mobile phone rang and Jack de Leon's name registered on the screen. Jack is a close business associate of the "Pacman."

But the girl in green was farthest from Jack's mind.

He was thinking of the man in the purple sweater, the Black Nazarene.

Jack said he had just read my column on Black Nazarene devotees and had something interesting to add.

* * *

"Manny may not be a devotee but he is a firm believer in the power of the Black Nazarene," Jack said.

"I know because I was the one who went to the Quiapo parish just before his last fight against Juan Antonio Barrera to have his shorts blessed."

According to Jack, it has become a ritual for Manny to have his shorts blessed by priests from the Quiapo church.

"He has done it in his last six fights and he has won all of them: Two against Erik Morales, one each against Marco Antonio Barrera, Oscar De La Hoya and Ricky Hatton.

But as far as the girl in green is concerned, Jack said he knows absolutely nothing.

* * *

Winning the Feb. 2 bout against Vic Emerbienes in Cebu could be the passport of 2 Gomez to his first ever world title. Gerbec continues to be one of the more promising Filipino pugilists but he has yet to win a title. For the first attempt also in Cebu against Fernando Montiel via a split decision.

The Amnesian boxer has won over Filipinos Oscodaldo Gabi, Rolando Catalan and Glen Donaire by KO, but lost to the latter's younger brother Nonito via last fight.

* * *

Gabby Espinas of Air 21 and his wife were already seated at the table next to ours when other rogues arrived. Gimme 3 Hotshotand, Rali Morris and Michael Gallardo.

I asked Gimbo assistant coach Allan Caidic, who was to our table, if there was an occasion to celebrate at the Sakata Restaurant, Silay Avenue. I was wondering what brought the four together, Espinas being an old mentor.

The three were all 10-time and all playing for Gimbo.

Allan said there was no occasion. The four just get together regularly to bond.

Maybe the common denominator is Japanese food, which they all love.

On the other hand, they too, could be wondering at the strange assemblage in our table. Allan, fellow-columnist Ronnie Nathaniel, Barefoot coach Genevieve Thongsom, Laguna's Civil foundation secretary general Bubbles Ignacio and myself.

Ni, kan, Japanese food too.

Choi keeps Sony lead; Fil-Aussie misses cut

HONOLULU — A DIFFERENT WEEK, A DIFferent island and a much different view for K.J. Choi.

Seven days ago, Choi was bringing up the rear in the Mercedes-Benz Championship, last among 33 winners at Kapalua going into the weekend. On Friday he closed with three straight birdies for a 5-under 65 and a two-shot lead in the Sony Open.

"I know that I was going to play better than last week, but I didn't really think about being in the lead or anything," Choi said.

Filipino-Australian Jason Day, who used to hope to challenge Tiger Woods someday, fired a 70 (1-0) and missed the cut two-over-par set by four strokes.

The bottom of the leaderboard — and one that left some players lost under the collar — was far down the leaderboard at the cut line. The PGA Tour has a new policy this year to limit the field size on the weekend, and it knocked out John Daly, Brandt Snedeker and 16 other players.

"I don't understand the rule. I think it's crazy," Daly told Golf Channel. "It's a stupid rule. I'm sorry."

Daly and those who finished at even-par 140 will received official last-place money of $10,099 and 46 points toward the FedEx Cup. But they won't have a one time on Saturday.

The policy allows for the top 70 professionals and ties, as always, but if that number exceeds 70 players, then the closest number of players to 70 advance to the final two rounds, ninety-nine players finished at 1-under 139.

Todd Fujikawa didn't factor into either of those scenarios. Scrambling to make the cut for the first time in nine professional starts, he took double-bogey on his 18th hole, shot a 78 and missed the cut by four shots.

"I gave it a good run," Fujikawa said, who remains in the 11th grade on hiatus.

Choi was on 11-under 129 and had a two-shot lead over Kevin Na, who shot 64 and was the only player to make a move in the afternoon.

After seeing Choi's score when he teed off, Na was determined to get in the final group with him. Then he bogeyed his opening tee shot into the water, and his next tee shot to the bunker, assembling for par back to back.

AP

JOHN Rozier (left/bottom) of New Jersey battles Kevin Garnett (left/top) of Boston for a rebound while the Nets' Malik Allen and the Celtics' Paul Pierce battle for position. AP

Celtics get back on track

KG shines as Boston trips New Jersey; Cavs triumph

EAST RUTHERFORD, NEW JERSEY — THE BOSTON CELTICS WON THEIR 30th game of the National Basketball Season on Friday to equal the best start in franchise history.

Kevin Garnett scored 20 points with 11 rebounds and Paul Pierce chipped in 18 points for the Celtics, who have amassed their 30 victories in just 34 games.

Rookie Glen Davis also played a key role, scoring six straight points to a 13-0 fourth-quarter run that coursed as 86-77 victory over the New Jersey Nets.

Davis helped the Celtics rally from a seven-point deficit with three straight layups in the fourth-quarter outburst.

"It's really big," Davis said of coming off the bench to post seven points and four rebounds in just 14 minutes.

"The big guys need to rest. I stepped up at the right time to be successful. They needed someone to run the plays. I somehow got the ball and made the shots."

Ray Allen contributed 16 points as he and the Celtics recovered from Wednesday's surprising home loss to the Charlotte Bobcats. Allen was held out of that contest with a pinched nerve in his neck.

New Jersey's Jason Kidd came up one assist short of his fourth triple-double in five games, finishing with 11 points, 12 rebounds and nine assists.

Kidd moved into 40th place on the NBA's all-time assists list with 9,061, passing Rockets coach Isaiah Thomas.

Richard Jefferson led the Nets with 17 points as New Jersey saw their three-game home-winning streak broken.

In Cleveland, LeBron James scored eight of his 21 points in second overtime, and pulled clear a career-high 19 rebounds to lead Cleveland over Charlotte, 113-106.

Jamaal Magloire gave the Cavaliers a 103-102 lead early in the second overtime. He followed with a free throw and a jump shot before Damon Jones' three-pointer from the corner gave Cleveland a 109-103 lead with 1:27 left, sticking the dagger.

In New Orleans, Bobby Jackson made a career-high seven three-pointers and had 25 points to lead New Orleans over Miami, 114-88.

Jackson, who made all nine of his shots, became the first Hornets player ever to make seven triples in a winning one. That also tied Jackson for third in NBA history for most triples in a game without a miss, two days of Darrell Sprewell's record.

New Orleans, off to its best 36-game start in team history, made 15 three-pointers and shot 61 percent overall in winning for the ninth time in 11 games. Miami, by contrast, is on a losing skid that has resulted in 13 losses.

Jason Williams scored 22 points as Washington downed Atlanta in overtime, 113-98.

Caron Butler added 21 for the Wizards, who knocked down 22 of 24 free throws.

The Hawks downed just 12-of-22 from the foul line.

Antonio Daniels scored off a finger roll with 37.5 seconds left in overtime to put the Wizards ahead to stay. Butler and Daniels sealed the win at the line, going 6-of-8 in the rest of the way.

In Philadelphia, Andres Nocioni scored 27 points and Chicago rolled to 76ers Philadelphia, 120-97.

Joe Smith added 19 for the Bulls, who improved to 14-20 overall and 5-3 under interim coach Jim Boylan.

In Houston, the home team downed Minnesota, 113-82, on sole for the seventh time in the nine games Yao McGrady has missed with a knee injury.

AFP/AP

MARION Jones' plea for mercy, which included invoking her two children, fell on deaf ears. AP

Jones given 6-month jail sentence for dope, fraud

WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK — MARION Jones said she was scared. She said she was sorry. With a catch in her voice, she said her young sons needed her.

"I ask you to be as merciful as a human being can be," she implored the judge.

To no avail.

The former Olympic track gold medalist was sentenced to six months in prison Friday for lying in investigators about using performance-enhancing drugs and her role in a check fraud scam.

And so ended a long fall from grace for the one-time fastest woman on earth.

She hunted over the courtroom, sniffing and softly cried into her husband's shoulder.

Jones' spool, along with a dazzling smile, pleasant personality and remarkable style, made her an instant national superstar even before she won five medals at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. The medals and her riches are gone now, and she has been "put through humiliation with great fanfare," said U.S. District Judge Kenneth Karas, who sentenced her.

He said Jones damaged two federal interest agencies with her that cause years apart, so "I don't think the criminal conduct can be written off as a momentary lapse of judgment or a one-time mistake, but instead a repetition of an attempt to break the law."

The check-fraud scheme was a major crime and the wide use of steroids "affects the integrity of athletic competition," he said. If Jones had told the truth from the start, he said, it would have been a great help to the ongoing BALCO investigation.

Later Friday, the judge sentenced Jones' former coach, Olympic champion Steve Pilitrick, to 5 years and 3 months in prison for his role in the check-fraud scam. Pilitrick also was given three years' probation and must pay back $370,000.

Jones pleaded with the judge not to separate her from her sons "even for a short period of time," saying she was still nursing the youngest one. She is married to Olympic sprinter Obadele Thompson.

"This is my disappointed today," Jones told reporters outside court. "But as I stand in front of all of you for years to victory, I stand in front of you today. I respect the judge's order and I only hope that people will learn from my mistakes."

AP

Roddick bags Kooyong crown

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA — ANDY Roddick won his third consecutive title at Kooyong and said he'll happily exchange them all for one at the Australian Open.

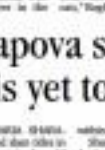
"Is there a three-for-one special deal—3 AMEs for an Aussie Open?" Roddick joked with the crowd, extending himself if he sounded ungrateful, after a 7-5, 6-3 win over Marcos Baghdatis on Saturday.

Roddick beat top-ranked Roger Federer at the Kooyong exhibition last year, then lost a lopsided semifinal to the Swiss star at the Australian Open.

He did not drop a set this year as he snatched Michael Chang's three straight titles from 1993. Andre Agassi won three titles in four years in a streak broken by Wes Sampras' win in 2002.

Now he wants to improve his record at the Australian Open, where his best results have been semifinal appearances in 2003 and 2007.

"I'm still young and hungry at 25," Roddick said, hoping that the citizen that came with losing the United States to Davis Cup win was left from the quarterfinals.



RODDICK

He's seeded second and finished with zero against Baghdatis, who runs runner-up to Federer in the 2006 Australian Open.

The 22-year-old Cypriot was a late scratch, down in the eight-man tournament despite a 6-3 victory over Mario Ancic in the opening round to a difficult section of the draw that also includes 2003 champion Fabrice Santoro, 2005 finalist Guillermo Coria and No. 5-seeded Novak Djokovic.

"I knew it's a bit rough, but life is rough, at least, my life was rough, so I guess I have to accept it and deal with it and try to do as best as I can," Baghdatis said.

AP

SHARAPOVA Hard work will pay off soon AP

Sharapova says her best is yet to come

MELBOURNE — MARIA SHARAPOVA has had two grand slam titles in the bag and has attained world No. 1 status, but the Russian still believes her best is yet to come.

The world No. 3, a favorite for the Jan. 14-27 Australian Open, says Wimbledon as a 17-year-old in 2004 and believes she is still getting better.

"I hear the words that I put in on the court and I know that some day it will pay off," Sharapova, runner-up to Melbourne 12 months ago, told reporters on Saturday.

"Saying that, I'm still 20 years old. I've said it many times, I don't think this is the peak of my career. I believe that there are many more years to go, and I'm going to learn from all those experiences within those years."

Sharapova said world No. 1 Justine Henin was the "big to-beat" and that defending champion Serena Williams and her sister Venus were also big threats for the title.

But the Russian said her recovery-the attitude would stand her in good stead over the next fortnight.

"I've proven it before and I've done it before, so I don't think you can ever count me out," she said.

"No matter how confident or not, no matter where my ranking is, I'm one of the toughest competitors out there. I never leave the court without giving 100 percent, and that's why I think I gain a lot of respect from my fans and from the tennis industry."

Reuters

Sunday SPORTS

Paragua leads; Bernales stuns Indonesian GM

MARK Paragua

Paragua has yet to play his postponed first-round match against countryman Oliver Barbosa.

With her victory over Hendriko (Elo 2247), the 14-year-old Bernales climbed to 2.5 points in three rounds, 1.5 points behind pacesetter Indonesian IM Irvansyah Sadikin, who swept her first four assignments, and half a point behind Hendriko and IM Utut Adianto, also of Indonesia.

Bernales, daughter of a former rank driver Jesus Nuevo Bernales, also won over WFM Victoria Chua of Singapore in the second round and drew with Bornean freelancer of his domestic in the third round.

She has now registered game against compatriot WFM Jewel Ty Mendoza in the first round.

Gonzales, bidding to become the country's next GM, dropped into a tie for ninth to eighth places with two wins and one loss, the same record of fellow Filipinos Rolando Nolte and Barbosa.

Nolte halved the point with Indonesian GM Cendra Simon (Elo 2479) while Barbosa whipped Malaysian FM Mok Tze Heng (Elo 2366).

Before losing to Paragua, Gonzales thrashed Indonesian IWM Inter Sahendar in the second round and bagged Prayitno in the third.

At the UPLA bunker, Engmar Tiam (Elo 2519) split the point with fellow GM Worky Ito (2526) while IM Basilio Madera turned in a win in leader IM Sinsyi Nathaniel (2375) of Indonesia. —Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

FILIPINO GRANDMASTER MARK Paragua took the lead over an Grinly Lamsel Iturralde bagged the spotlight by stunning Indonesian GM Edhi Handoko in the First Asean Masters Chess Circuit in Tarakan, Indonesia, on Friday.

Paragua (Elo 2501) bested countryman International Master Jayem Gonzales (Elo 2452) to grab the sole lead in the GM (Grandmaster) II event.

The 23-year-old Davaqua also won over ex-Asean IM Ashot Nadanian in the second round and Indonesian Feb Master Sharif Mahmud in the third round.

IN THIS ISSUE
- Relics of Martial Law at the mall /B3
- Single mom runs a business while working full time /B4

Sunday Biz
Website: www.inquirer.net/business
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Reyes

Priest's good deed 39 years ago still yields fruits

Borrowers told 'money you borrow is money from other people, so you have to pay'

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

BIG BANKS AND OTHER financial companies tried parking up a branch in the town of Hinunangan in Southern Leyte, but they all eventually gave up and left.

They had to those became the fourth class town's residents chose to put their money in the Sts. Peter and Paul Multipurpose Cooperative that they can rightly call their own.

From a simple savings and loan association put up by former parish priest Fr. Fredrick Hohebacher in 1968, Sts. Peter and Paul has grown to become the town's dominant financial and commercial institution with over P104 million in assets generated from the contributions of over 2,000 regular members—mostly farmers and fisherfolk.

Those assets include a business center in front of the public market, which houses the cooperative's grocery and hardware store, as well as a training facility that can accommodate 400 people, 11 rental pension houses and grains center, reputedly the biggest in Southern Leyte, which has 19 warehouses.

Sts. Peter and Paul with its full-time staff of 10 likewise oversees thriving palay production and has factioning businesses in the town and is firming up plans to put up branches in the other municipalities because of the chance of residents there to join the cooperative.

That Sts. Peter and Paul was able to grow its business from a starting capital of just P800 to 1968 to over P105 million today has earned for it numerous awards from institutions such as the Land Bank of the Philippines, the Department of Agriculture and the Cooperative Development Authority.

Landbank assistant vice president Agustin Frederick A. Apilado said Landbank has a soft spot for cooperatives because of their "vital role in promoting countryside development."

"We consider them partners through which we ensure our financial and technical support to the farmers, fisherfolk, small and medium scale enterprises and other priority sectors," Apilado added.

Landbank recognized Sts. Peter and Paul so many times that the cooperative was elevated to the bank's Hall of Fame in 2004, making it one of the best cooperatives in the Philippines under the agricultural cooperative category.

Sts. Peter and Paul chair Eumenio D. Sabal Jr. told the Inquirer in an interview, however, that the road to success has not been without detours, bumps and even dead ends.

Recall regular that like many other cooperatives, Sts. Peter and Paul had its bouts with mismanagement, massive withdrawals and loan delinquency. There were even times when the cooperative came close to shutting down because of financial difficulties.

He, however, says that the spirit of cooperativism managed to drive through despite the difficulties and had helped pull the institution from the brink of bankruptcy.

And Sts. Peter and Paul emerged from those crisis stronger and better equipped than before. Members and management learned from the other costly mistakes.

Take note, that on solve the problem with delinquency, for instance, the cooperative has put in place 28 barangay coordinators given the task of collecting loan payments from the members in 16 barangays.

These coordinators, who go as far as knocking on each house in remote areas to collect payments, also have the responsibility of informing the members about the latest developments in the cooperative, including new products on sale in the hardware and the latest selling charge at the grains center.

"We also conduct an owners' meeting twice a year and a general assembly once a year to discuss the cooperative's direction and to encourage the active participation of the members," Abad says in a mix of Hiligaynon and Bisaya. "If there is one secret to the success of the cooperative, it is the participation of the members."

PHOTOS by

THE STS. Peter and Paul Multipurpose cooperative now owns many businesses in Hinunangan, Leyte

FARMERS and fisherfolk make up the bulk of the cooperative's membership.

Swiss Army Knife makers branch out

BACH, SWITZERLAND—IT WAS THE flip open tool of the 20th century, but the Swiss Army Knife fell out of favor as mobile phones and MP3 players tied for pocket space.

Now from their base in what is popularly known as Swiss Army Knife Valley in central Switzerland, its makers are fighting back, with a range of products carrying the iconic brand as well as the creation of a flagship store in New York.

"We realized to make our brand mean more to the end consumer our range of products," said Hans Scherrer, a spokesman for privately held Victorinox—one of the makers of knives supplied to Swiss soldiers. (85 percent are supplied by the Swiss Army Knife.)

One catalogue said a strong Swiss made label and pure-play brand quality have recently helped lift sales of the knife in the face of cheaper competition and imitators.

Victorinox does not issue public financial reports but said sales totaled 605 million Swiss francs in 2006.

"In the meantime this 'Swiss made' brand is particularly cool," said Lenzburg-based Zofer equity analyst Jon Cox, who specializes in Swiss retail companies.

With its myriad tools like tweezers and bottle openers, the gadget reaches a massive dispensable to the chuck-it traveller.

But in the wake of Sept. 11, 2001, when airlines banned knives on board, sales of the knives—which were often purchased as a souvenir at airport stores—fell by around a third, said Carl Elsener Jr, who runs the company with his 83-year-old father, Carl Elsener Sr).

"Only in 2006 and 2007 sales started to recover slowly by about 5 percent per year," said Elsener, whose family still holds 10 percent of the firm founded by his great-grandfather.

Victorinox also has been key Victorinox gear sells luggage, kitchen knives, clothing and watches, each emblazoned with the firm's logo—a white cross within a red oval. There is even a perfume, which online reviewers have described as "woodsy" in scent.

An updated range of pocket knives, including ones equipped with laser pointers and flash memory drives for storing data or music, has also helped the firm ride out the sales decline.

Besides the knives—which are actually supplied to more than a dozen armies globally—Victorinox produces for the Swiss—is a broad array of products for the gardener, angler, mechanic or geek.

Sharp tools

Great-grandfather Karl launched his knife-making company in 1884 and supplied the Swiss army with its first Swiss-made knife six years later. His first was named after his mother Victoria and later extended to include a sync for stainless steel—Inox.

While the term Swiss Army Knife has come to be used as shorthand for any multi-tasking device, Victorinox is one of only two companies that can use them to claim to the trademark.

The other company, Wenger, is based in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. It was bought out by Victorinox in 2005 in an effort to safeguard national production.

A suggestion that the Swiss Army might no longer put producers of the knife out to international tender has aroused concern among residents of Swiss Army Knife Valley, but Victorinox says it is confident it can keep meeting military needs—which make up less than 1 percent of annual sales.

"Since 2897, Victorinox has been supplying the Swiss Army with the Soldier Knife. It is very difficult for me to imagine that the next generation (will not be) made in Switzerland," said Carl Elsener Jr.

Even though the Swiss Army Knife has been featured in the collection of the New York Museum of Modern Art since the late 1970s, a slightly Boy Scout-image has stuck.

Comedians including Jerry Seinfeld have mocked the knives by targeting lip images of a militia army defending their country with a tool file and a corkscrew.

"However, the knives' real world uses are legion. The company has testimonials detailing emergency operations, rescues and even amputations performed with versions of the humble tool knife.

John Ross, a Canadian surgeon, arose to the firm in the early 1980s about how he used his knife, with a saw blade attached, to perform unpromptu while based in Uganda.

Swiss-made

"Shortly after I arrived here, my surgical case was stolen," he wrote. "So I took the Swiss Army Knife that I always have with me, and bolted it to another. I decided to use the saw blade as a temporary amputation device."

A self-confessed patient and perfectionist, Victorinox's senior managing director Carl Elsener Jr still cycles to work at the firm's plant in the small community of Ibach, where his attributes (the company's) strength to its uncommon detail.

"In the countryside, the Victorinox factory appears labor-intensive: around 1,400 workers assemble 28,000 Swiss Army Knives a day, many of them by hand, as well as 90,000 other tools and kitchen knives.

Swiss analyst Cox said the belief in Swiss quality—the kind of thoroughness-obsession that is also a characteristic of Switzerland's watch-making industry—has become a key asset for micro-engineering companies like medical and gadget makers.

The importance of Switzerland's reputation for quality is clear in the way the company refuses to contemplate outsourcing production to cheaper locations.

"We would not have bought Wenger if we were planning to move production to Asia," said Scherrer.

There have been attempts to pursue the ace of the Swiss flag and "Swiss-made" label, but Elsener is unsure how far they can succeed given that more competition for the army knife market comes from Asia, and in particular, China.

"We support efforts to protect the Swiss-made label and the use of the Swiss flag on products made in Switzerland," Elsener said. "Unfortunately however, it will be very difficult to convince such efforts outside of Switzerland."

The tools are finding new converts—28-year-old Tim O'Connor, a resident of Bermuda, was given Swiss Army Knives as a gift for her recent wedding. "I keep it in my purse for small emergencies. We just need to remember when travelling to keep these little items in our checked luggage and not in our carry-ons," she told Reuters by e-mail.

Reuters

A WORKER checks the shafts of Swiss army pocket knives at the production facility of Swiss knives manufacturer Victorinox in Ibach near Schwyz.

Oprah effect brings microlending to US Main Street

NEW YORK—THE CREDIT crisis may be fueling up billion-dollar takeover deals, but if you're a poor African entrepreneur who needs a loan for a new sewing machine, you could not ask for a better borrowing market to expand your business.

Anyone with $25 to spare and an Internet connection can now become an international microfinancier through Kiva (http://www.kiva.org), an organization that matches individual lenders with impoverished entrepreneurs in the developing world.

Steve Thomas, 38, a property tax consultant in Chicago, got started by lending $50 to a man in Togo who makes hollow concrete blocks and wanders for resale. The loan was repaid in full and Thomas has gone on to fund 83 other ventures ranging from a cyber cafe in Ecuador to a smokeless cookstove enterprise in Moldova.

Microlending has been in use for decades. Muhammad Yunus shared the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize with Grameen Bank, the lender he founded in the early 1980s to help empower Bangladesh's rural poor. Several other institutions have developed since then, but Kiva is the first to open direct microlending opportunities to the general public with an online platform.

Kiva hit the publicity jackpot in September when Oprah Winfrey featured the organization on her TV program, announcing a total matching of interest from Middle America. Its 111,000 users have lent out a total of $16.7 million.

Since then, Kiva has limited lenders to a $25-portion of each loan, the average of which is about $600.

Even with the $25 cap, Kiva's lenders manage to fully fund each loan in 8.57 days, on average.

The recent holiday season brought a fresh crop of lenders—Kiva sold $2.2 million in gift certificates, which the giver were able to print out from their computers.

Such ease of use and affordability is what Thomas credits with Kiva's popularity. He also sees long-term political and economic benefits for the United States.

Unity

Aisha Tarman, 33, was 19th staffing whose she identified upon Kiva. The organization's name comes from the Swahili word for "agreement" or "unity," the "bound through kindred profiles.

She identified with a Tanzanian shopkeeper who shared the same first name.

The shopkeeper paid Tarman back in full, consistent with Kiva's 99.61 percent of all loans. Instead of reclaiming her $25, she went on to fund new loans, setting in motion a cascade of micro-lending.

"It's particularly harder for women to get credit to move up the ladder, but especially in a developing nation," Furman said. By lending to mothers, "you're not just helping an individual, you're helping a community."

Tarman and Thomas say they don't mind not earning any interest on the loans they make. The interest charged to the borrowers goes toward the administration of the loan, which can be expensive and time-consuming in areas where infrastructure is barely developed.

The average interest rates charged by Kiva's field partners is 22 percent, though the rates range from as low as 6 percent to as high as 55 percent. Rates are determined by the borrowers and by the staff of the local organizations and the services they offer to borrowers. In some parts of Latin America, a loan at 50 percent is still less expensive than borrowing from a local money lender, whose rates can top 100 percent.

Reuters

Priest's good deed 39 years ago still yields fruits

Today, the cooperative boasts of a loan repayment rate of 92 percent, although the rate is said to be a result of frequent home visits by those who can demonstrate their ability and willingness to pay back.

Members can tap the cooperative for education, salary emergency, farming, vehicle, appliance and insurance loans of up to 99,000,000 that carry an interest rate of about 12 percent a year, compared to 18 percent charged by other institutions.

In 2006, members got back a dividend of 8 percent and a patronage refund of 10 percent of their loan payments.

That tops the dividend and the financial assistance from the cooperative have enabled members to grow their businesses—like rice production, piggery, poultry and trading—send their children to school and put up their homes.

He says this is why the cooperative gets an average of 10 new members a month.

All they had to do was put up capital of P1,000 and go to a pre-membership seminar designed to introduce to them the value of paying loans so they fall due for the good of the cooperative.

"What we tell them is that the money they borrow is money from other people, so they have to pay," Ilocal says.

The cooperative, he adds, still has a lot of room to grow as only about 1,000 of the 15,000 voting adults in Sinamangan are members.

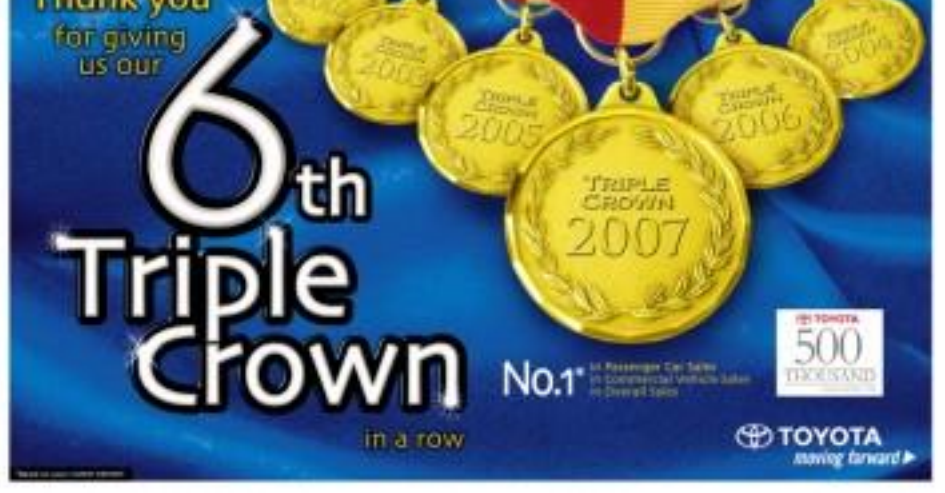
"What we want is for everybody in town to become a member and we want quality members, those who will patronize the cooperative's services, will regularly pay and make a regular deposit," he says.

And the list of services keeps on growing.

As the cooperative nears its 900-member mark, Ilocal says there are plans for the cooperative to go into cable television operation and expand share and coffee plantations for the good of its members and the community.

Sisi had richest for a cooperative that traces its beginnings to a church office.

THE COOP is the biggest grain owner in the province.



Relics of martial law at the mall

By Jacqueline Cascio-Rigo
Correspondent

I HAVE TO CONFESS THAT I AM ONE of those who cannot take being frisked by mall guards loudly. I can understand the need for it in the airport, but recent travels to Hong Kong and Bangkok have me convinced that we continue this abhorrent practice as a carry over from the martial law years. Bangkok, emerging from martial law circumstances after Thaksin was overthrown in 2006 doesn't frisk shopping shoppers at the malls, they even, mean transit scrutiny at anywhere in the city. Hong Kong, a special administration region of communist China, doesn't do it either. Everyone has security issues as we recover (to that as a relative neophyte to us). My sweetheart's friend who manages some cosmetic brands in the Philippines, only started to feel the security presence close in on her after taking pictures of her brand's counter at a Bangkok mall. She calls it "profiling the customer" which is a more sophisticated word for what the brain draws automatically. Here, they assimilate that a customer is a valued person and not a potential criminal.

Now, the guards-cum-officials if not doesn't allow them their taken search and pat-down back. This is especially true of SM Malls. I usually decline this on my back since as my psychological coping mechanism to minimize their invasion of my person. To my consternation, when I went shopping last December, the security guard was ready for me. She was both hands down my "shapely" curves with a vengeance. I felt so violated! I was the only one receiving this special treatment! It seems they had been briefed how to handle people like me. I decided that I would give them a dose of their own medicine. So, on my next visit, the same thing happened. Only this time, I turned to the lady guard and returned the favor. She didn't know what hit her. It happened once again at another entrance and again. I ran my hands down her shapely curve. She was so surprised and scoffed "sorry ha?" I believed my second-hand.

Daniel Goleman, who authored "Emotional Intelligence" has come out with another book entitled "Social Intelligence" which explores the emerging field of social neuroscience. His further quotes Gazzaniga, a pioneering psychologist, in this new field: "Today, we can start to make sense of how the brain drives social behavior and in turn how our social world influences our brain and biology." If our interactions affect our brains and biology, then we should be careful about the stressors we subject ourselves to, such as this mall security procedure for it can shape us as a people.

Ace Bustos, the Secretary of Tourism is doing a fine job of promoting the Philippines. We an experiment I had at the Ayala MRT station shows him life it takes to undo his efforts. Two decent-looking foreigners (Europeans, I think, and a new sight) were at the security checkpoint. The problem was that their bags (backpacks and the security guard had to search a suitcase in tow) held up the line. The elderly man behind me started to grumble. "Bwisit lang mga Kano!" Now, I want to ask Secretary Bustos, if the locals feel "Bwisit," how do you expect us to embrace foreigners and make them feel welcome? On the Tourism's part, why should they come with this kind of experience?

If the Glorietta blast killed people, and cell phone snatching happens, and kids are kidnapped for ransoms, and robbers and bullets—all at the mall, why must they take our their failure to prevent these on us? Profiling people, instead of spending their time hysterically buried in our bags and groping us, sounds like a better way to do their job!

Martial marital law years were supposedly left behind in the mid-'80s, yet we wonder why people don't get their commissioners, why large turnouts from the Marcos era still hard it over us and lawless seems to have triumph the day is it because, we never dismantled the trappings of martial law? It would seem that the normative procedures of martial law were enshrined subconsciously by malls and gated subdivisions "communities." The repercussions of being unsettled are actually manifested away from the malls. It seems to have conditioned and primed us to fall easily into chaos and accept incivility. I suspect that it is one reason why Ted Failon is all's assault on Manila Peninsula succeeded so easily and garnered soaring votes for Sabaya, pious and other prominent political, society and media people who are normally level headed people. Assault has become ordinary, easy to tolerate and even participate in.

Mall owners should challenge their security details to be more subtle, sophisticated and not as in-your-face. The mall owner can do a lot to make sure a more civic society. Wishful? In commercial search on people with good intention—no drop. We are repaid by the mall owners by incivility to the nth degree. We have allowed it to happen for decades. For this New Year, we wish that the mall owners will "gift" the Filipino people with more openness, trust and good will. I hope they listen.

Jacqueline Cascio-Rigo (jcrigo@yahoo.com)

Soap-making seminar set

SUPERMARKETS AND GROCERY stores have high stacks and long rows of them.

Manufacturers hype their products as being antibacterial, moisturizing, whitening, anti-aging, vitamin-enriched, all-natural and more etc.

Attractive packaging and multimillion-peso ads and TV commercials have manufacturers to jack up their prices.

But all soaps are made for the same, simple reason. To clean or sanitize.

You can have cheap soap and even make money by bottling to make your own.

The Golden Treasure Skills and Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap making to be held at the College of Social Work and Community Development, Bliaguinay Avenue corner Thames St., University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City on Jan. 20, Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are material sourcing and costing.

Participants will experience how to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, hot detergent soap, herbal bath soap (papaya, kalamansi, cucumber, oatmeal, etc.), glycerin (transparent bath soap) and powder soap. Items include labels making by and labels, tile and hand creams, fabric softener, car shampoo, air freshener and preserving single-ingredient fat soap.

Participants will receive a certificate. All materials will be provided.

For questions, please call 436-70-20, 433-68-33, 913-68-53, and 421-31-77.

Learning centers bring light to Malabon and Navotas

MALABON AND NAVOTAS ARE CITIES IN the threshold of development. Both are known for their fishing industry and festivities that manufacture various consumer goods. However, both cities are also infamous for their marginalized sector which continues to be a challenge for their local governments.

The local governments have been working to cater to the needs of the school children. Basically, they are provided for their children's health, security and education. But the local government cannot do it alone. It is tapping civic-minded and socially responsible private people and institutions to help the children.

To help, Miranda brought to Miranda Island School in various Coastal Kidapa communities and the Lirunag Learning Center in various schools in the country, with support from the Department of Education.

"We believe that if a child is nurtured well, he or she will grow up to become a responsible citizen. A responsible citizen will then be a valuable member of a community. If we have vibrant communities, then we will have a progressive nation," said Manuel M. Lopez, Meralco chair and CEO, who is also the "bearer of light" since he has never missed any of the inauguration of the Silliad Schools and Lirunag Learning Centers.

Recently, Meralco reached out to the cities of Malabon and Navotas with the unveiling of a Lirunag Learning Center inside the Epifanio delos Santos Elementary School and Sipol-dagatan Elementary School, respectively. It was attended by Meralco officials led by Mr. Lopez, and the city's top government officials with Vice Mayor Arnold Vicencio leading the Malabon contingent and Mayor Tobby Tiangco gracing the event in Navotas.

"It is my wish to see that this city become a very progressive one somehow through ensuring that the preschool kids receive the proper education and learn in a conducive environment," said Lopez in his speech which stressed that the preschool kids who are exposed to the correct learning will be the "second fiber for the future of our country."

Apart from the construction of the school, the Lirunag Learning Centers are equipped with a Learning Learning Package consisting of learning materials, storybooks, educational toys, furnishing and equipment to support the holistic development of the child.

PSBank
Peso Time Deposit

Deposit Amount	Interest Rates	
In Pesos	Less than 1 Year	1 Year
100,000 - 499,999	3.50	3.50
500,000 - 999,999	3.75	3.75
1.0MM - 4.99MM	4.50	4.50
5.0MM - 9.99MM	4.75	4.75
10.0MM and up	4.75	4.75

Rates are subject to change without prior notice. As of 10 January 2008. Not for sale to residents of the United States.

Maximize your account online via PSBank Remote Banking.
Open a time deposit now in any of 80 branches nationwide.

For more information, call PSBANK (727-2265) or your nearest branch or contact Mabel Ong at 841-2800/02 for Manila and suburban inquiries, or Ruth Ann Ramos at 841-2800/02 for Cebu and provincial inquiries.

Member PDIC

Coffeemaker taps the health-conscious with new products

COFFEE HAS CEASED TO BE JUST A pick-me-up drink for people. It has now also become their beverage of choice when bonding with family and friends or simply losing their creative energies and, with recent research indicating their various health benefits, is now being enjoyed by people who want to boost their antioxidant levels.

Antioxidants like those found in coffee help prevent the formation of harmful free radicals, one of the main reasons of aging.

This year, the Nescafé Body Partner line introduces two more products to complement one's healthy lifestyle—Nescafé Fit and Nescafé Fit-Tea.

Nescafé Fit is a coffee mix sweetened with sugar substitute and enhanced with orange, a natural diuretic.

Taken with regular exercise and a healthy diet, it can help enhance metabolism and increase fat oxidation. It is the perfect coffee for those who want to enjoy a delicious, guilt-free coffee experience while at the same time enjoy the many health benefits and more that coffee has.

Nescafé Fit-Tea is a refreshingly complete coffee mix with chamomile extract.

Chamomile has been used for ages to remedy various ailments and has been popular for its relief of anxiety, insomnia and stress.

Nescafé Fit-Tea helps soothe one's stress away while at the same time enjoy a warm cup of good coffee.

For more on the health benefits of coffee, log on to www.nescafe.com.ph.

Sunday BIZ

Single mom runs a business while working full time

Pilot in papermaking from rice straw focuses on local market

Text and Photos
by Nikka Catharine Calleja
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—He Pitable, 53, only accepted a friend's offer to be a "cooperator" in a government pilot project to produce handmade paper out of indigenous materials.

She never thought she would end up managing a thriving business while continuing as a full-time employee.

Pitable is a personnel officer of Forest Products Research and Development Institute (FPRDI) of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) in Baños, a single parent of two kids, and secretary of the Los Baños Handmade Paper Enterprise.

The Paper Enterprise started as part of FPRDI's project in 1986 to help the dependents of forest resources find alternative raw materials to produce paper like abaca fibers, sugarcane and rice straw.

A cooperator backed out and Pitable took the place thinking the project would not materialize without someone adopting the new technology in hand-made paper.

Years 1989 to 1998

"Of course, I also wanted to earn some money to augment my low salary, but I was hesitant. I know nothing about running a business," she says in Filipino, adding, she was just a personnel aide at that time.

By 1989, Pitable was exporting paper products to Australia, South Carolina and Spain. She developed various designs of handmade paper sheets, boxes, and wreaths out of silk flowers and natural materials. What followed were orders of wedding invitations and giveaways.

PITABLE... owner of Los Baños Handmade Paper Enterprise

THE VARIOUS designs of handmade paper sheets, boxes and wreaths made of assorted silk flowers and natural materials. Pitable also accepts orders of wedding invitations and giveaways.

Agencies' assistance

Pitable says that apart from her passion and perseverance, many institutions helped her put up and maintain the business.

When the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) learned about the paper-making project that uses rice straw, it immediately extended help by giving her the rice farmers' waste materials.

Its Communication and Publications Department became her first client with its order of 2000 paper sheets it would use for the department's Christmas cards.

Pitable, however, confirmed that managing a business is not as easy as she once thought. "You will begin to see the real problem in the production," she says.

One of her problems with her first order from IRRI was lack of capital in purchasing the materials of paper sheets on the target date.

"I told the head of the communications department of IRRI my problem. Then, he gave me the down payment for me to finish the order on time," she says, referring to Dr. Rene Sta Cruz.

IRRI also helped by producing a video production featuring her business and the procedures in papermaking from materials like rice straws.

"Our business was broadcast on television and radio. They DIDN also wrote a story about our business and disseminated it to all Savage-ambassadors," she says.

It's helped them attain recognition and obtain buyers here and abroad, she says.

"It came to a point where I had so many buyers requiring about my products but my problem was I did not have enough capital," she says.

That was the time the Technology Resource Center lent her a sum of P5,000 without collateral.

Good in business

As orders for her products increased, she became more interested in the paper industry.

"I became aware that I could create different paper designs. From there on, I regularly browsed lifestyle magazines to look for new ideas and trends," she says.

Pitable enjoys making paper products, especially during Christmas when she would create a collection of Mr. Claus images made of paper. She would also join trade fairs and mall exhibits where she now export buyers.

But a thriving business took its toll on other aspects of her life...her child. Once said her work is ONGOE.

"There was a time when I was neglecting my own kids. One became sickly and the other had failing grades in school," she recalls.

In 1998, she decided to focus on the local market. Since then, the bulk of her products went mostly to local establishments. She admits it was difficult to give up the export market because it was growing.

"Plus, my family and my neighbors were benefiting from the business," she explains, adding that it also provided ways for entrepreneurs in the paper business to avoid the rotting down of trees.

"The fact that we are using the wastes that are usually being burned means so much for the environment," she says.

Although Los Baños Handmade Paper usually outsources work to people in her neighborhood, it hires five regular workers who are on call when there are bulk orders.

Pitable says she has been lucky dealing with the right governmental and non-government agencies for she admits her persistence plays a major role to maintaining her business.

"I am not really a business person but I learned how it is to be one. Now, I can tell the materials of a paper by merely touching and smelling it," she says.

Pitable plans to retire early from FPRDI so she could continue producing paper products.

This is how MedExpress uses PLDT SWUP for any emergency

How would you like to have your medicines delivered right to your doorstep and be able to pay for it with a convenient swipe of your credit card? Amazing, and YES! Dog goes to the catching car, even to the new neck of the woods!

MedEXPRESS Drugstore, the first and only delivery service drugstore in the Philippines, optimizes operations with PLDT SWUP. Chief Information Technology Officer Rafael D. San Juan says that EXPRESS Drugstore aims "to build value for manufacturers, suppliers and communities alike. We believe that access to essential prescription drugs should be safe, affordable and very convenient for all." Convenience, customer service, and cost-effectiveness, that's the MedEXPRESS Drugstore difference in a nutshell.

Its delivery service leads the way. With majority of sales coming from deliveries, the media is proving to be an extremely agile growth category. "Minimum amount for delivery is P2,000," San Juan affirms. For Greater Metro Manila Area (GMA), Metro Cebu and Metro Davao customers, delivery is free with a minimum purchase of P1,000.00. For orders below P1,000.00, a nominal delivery fee of only P99.00 is required.

Flexibility in SWUP Fee

MedEXPRESS has flexible up to 400-unit services within the GMA, Metro Cebu and Metro Davao by using PLDT SBLP (Single Bank Liaison Program), a service that streamlines bank-to-bank transactions to customers to conduct secure credit and debit card payments anywhere and at any time, over a secure, Virtual Private Network (VPN). For those who are short on cash or don't want to face over-the-counter transactions, MedEXPRESS delivery service to accept card payments. Riders are armed with SWUP Wireless Card Swipe Terminals instantly process Visa, MasterCard, JCB, and AMEX transactions through the Expanded Dial Backup (EDB) network.

"Even if you need just one tablet of medicine, we can deliver it right to your doorstep."

MEDEXPRESS... customer can swipe their card on MedExpress' wireless credit card terminal and the transaction is completed in seconds

For easy medicine access and convenience, MedEXPRESS customers have the option to swipe and pay while MedEXPRESS delivers meds do not have to worry about carrying the exact change nor the danger of getting up long queues of cash-pay meds. For MedExpress, customer service is a top priority and SWUP for meds strengthens service and store convenience.

Instantly Updates Customer Profile

In terms verification safety, MedEXPRESS maintains a confidential medication profile for each customer. This is critical information for physicians who want to recommend customers' true needs when prescription drugs on a regular basis. Through the Patient Compliance Program, customer compliance to their prescription medication is made better by reminding them via SMS to refill/avail refill when it is time for their medication regimen is needed.

Kudos to MedEXPRESS for taking the initiative to assist customers that access to essential prescription drugs is safe, convenient and affordable for all.

Make your health your top priority. If you are in Metro Manila, call MedEXPRESS today at 416-2333, 215-5000 for Metro Cebu and 220-5555 for Metro Davao. You can also contact their call center by dialing their domestic toll free number, 1-800-10-6431111.

Looking for a business solution like MedEXPRESS? Now, you can give your customers the convenience they deserve. Call PLDT at 777 or (632) 889-2789 for more information and SWUP your business today!

Sunday LIFESTYLE
Editor Chelo Bersi-Formoso

IN THIS ISSUE

Seaside wedding /C4
Pinoy history and culture on display /D4

GRACIOUS Gingjoo Diaz and her students with the stuck donation in Street Pals Foundation

ANTHONY Pangilinan, Heart Evangelista and Jericho Rosales with nurses and doctors at the neonatal intensive care unit

Reading, giving and unconventional parenting

All children deserve a life of hope and happiness, two things that they also give to us

TESSA!
Tessa Prieto-Valdes

TODAY'S COLUMN IS ALL ABOUT children and how wonderful life is because of them. Children are our true source of happiness and give meaningful purpose to life.

As a mother who juggles different responsibilities including being a wife, interior designer, entrepreneur, columnist and more, unbelievably, a singer, my kids are my priceless rewards for striving to be a better person.

Although I might be a most unconventional mother, Working Mom magazine put my 2-year-old Athena and I on the cover of their current issue. A gigantic poster of the cover is displayed in the storefronts of Toby & Co. at the Power Plant Mall in Rockwell.

Athena's godmother/mom, Dr Lisa Escalante, noted Athena's long dangling earrings and told me that seems to be a sign of things to come.

Working Mom editor Ibidet Reyes Pratelli got her expert crew together with Nivea executives to orchestrate the fun photo-shoot. This is already Athena's third magazine cover, and she is such a natural in front of the camera. Excellent photographer Auro Black was great to work with, especially as she captures perfect angles.

The magazine has an extensive parenting section, with age-by-age tips from pregnancy to teens. Other sections focus on bonding with the family, money and travel. Articles include monthly regular ideas to help moms start a small business.

Unconditional love

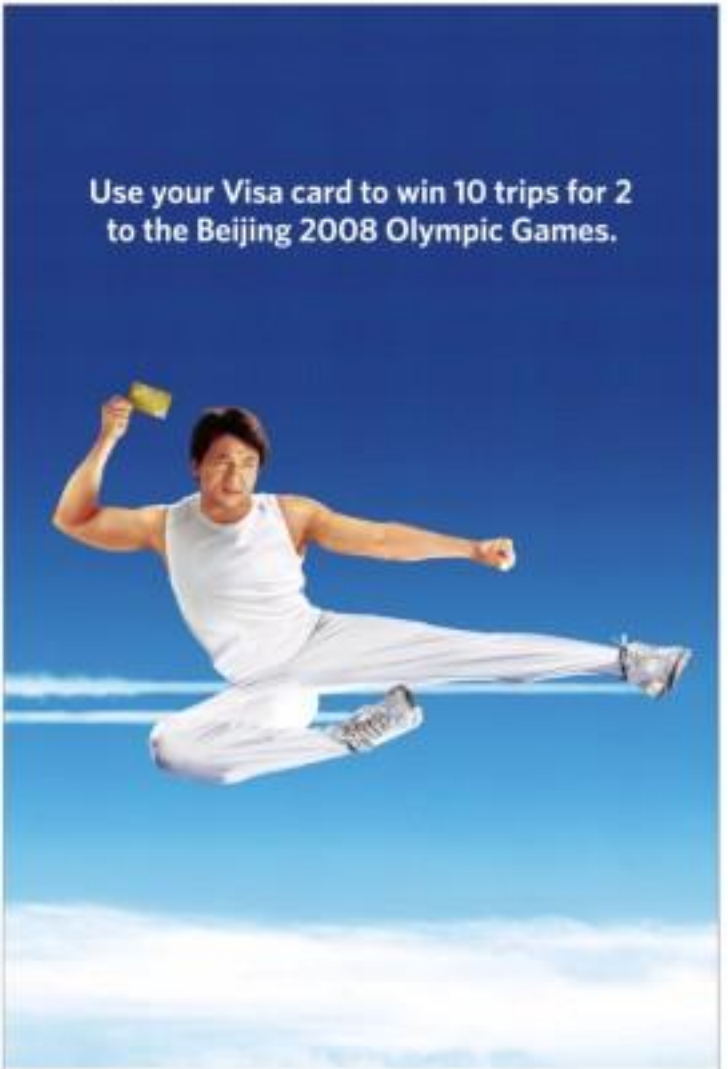
Motherhood does change one's whole perspective. Kids are constantly growing and changing, yet the unconditional love and devotion of parents remains the same. A children's book, "Hold on Tight," by Wendy Cunnyngham tells of treasuring every moment with kids as they grow faster than you realize.

At the book launch, hosted by Raul Manzanares and sponsored by Nivea Men, Tahanan Books editor in chief Rene Sioson gave a speech before a performance by the Sibol kids of Sukaya Central Baitugs (CB) village.

At the book-signing by Peachy and book's illustrator Axel Chan, all the guests including Socorro "Nanay Coring" Ramos of

MORE ON C2

HAPPY mom Ana Fernando with cute girls Lola and Lolay



CHARLENE Gonzalez, Peachy Concepcion, Hiyasmin Neri and Margo Garcia

MARICEL and Ella Pangilinan, Gigi Villareal, Marissa Concepcion, and Leah Barcelo and Joy Concepcion

TONIO and Rise Garcia, Katrina Gonzales, and Jessica Duarte and Vicky Jalandoni

KARINA Dolores, Lawrence and Cricket Lasco, Jessand Gerry Santos, and John and Peachy Concepcion

KIT Zobel, Peachy Concepcion and Tina Revilla-Ortiz

Reading, giving and unconventional parenting

TONY Garcia, Michael Concepcion and Margo Garcia

PLDT-SMART Foundation AVP-members Maricel Laxa-Pangilinan, Evangelines, Rosales and Dumlao Rose with the Rotary Club-of-QC Pearl of the Orient...PCPE representatives Mylene Ribenitos and Talk N' Text players Mac Cardenas and Harvey Carey

Foreign C1

National Book Store and Tony Meloto of Gk gave glowing reviews.

Gawad Kalinga head of operations Mimi Ongsiaotong was happy that all proceeds of the book sale are going to GK Enchanted Village. With each box containing a mother's love and devotion, the book is a keepsake and wonderful read.

Reading truly stimulates a child's mind. Adessa and I love to read her books over and over again, including books by doctor moms like Tin-tin Bermudez-Reiton and Shaheryl Lasa.

We enjoyed Tin-tin's second book, "Eastern Monsters," because it teaches kids the importance of cleaning up. One of Tin-tin Spa's celebrity moms, Tintin is a master at juggling your, career and writing.

Her latest book, "The Story of Chinatoy," will be part of books that she has shared with over 50 schools and organizations like the Yuchengo Foundation, thanks to sponsors like PLDT-Aid.

Hospital visit

Over the holidays, the PLDT/Smart Foundation played Santa to 300 patients of Philippine Children's Medical Center. The event, co-sponsored by Rexpan, included the turnover of 50+ tabulators by chairman/exec Henri Evangelista (also an asthma sufferer), but gorgeous partners Jeeshee Ramirez and Shining Light Francisco.

Married Laxa held a book reading after the gift-giving. She read her book, "Super-Bread," an account of the open-heart surgery of her youngest son Benjamin, and the role of God, family and friends in his complete healing.

Meanwhile, basketball stars, like Talk & Text's Rhaid Cardenas and Harvey Carrey, did the rounds of the hospital, giving out special gift bags together with members of the Rotary Club of Pearl of the Orient. All of these shots his stars brought so much sunshine to the patients and families, as well as to the hardworking medical staff.

The event will be aired soon on GMA's "Friendly Filipino," featuring Maricel in "A Day in the Life of a Celebrity."

PLDT/Smart Foundation head Anthony Pangilinan has also been aggressively spreading his angel wings and touching so many as possible.

His projects include helping orphaned children of the Philippine Christian Foundation School in Tondo under the auspices of British volunteer Jane Wallace, and uplifting over 50 cancer patients by giving them styling services by Small Image.

PHILIPPINE Youth Symphonic Band

Scintillating performance

The "marching cool" enthusiasm has also affected Maja Oliveros-Co, who has been generously giving her all...out support to the Philippine Youth Symphonic Band (e-mail youngmaestro@yahoo.com).

In its annual charity concert, the PSSO's scintillating performances was accompanied by powerful diva Moy Ituarte in ICSC Auditorium.

With her vocal dynamics, Moy displayed no mush passions and lived off jazz numbers with the incredibly outstanding young

WORKING Mom cover displayed at Baby & Co. Store

The concert was emceed by Nicky Morales, who had a "pregnant support" for the audience to be generous in aiding

24-HOUR DELIVERY

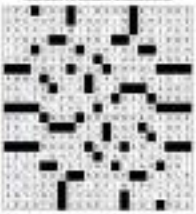
MONICA Moreno, Nicky Hussey and Nicky Tantoco

VICKY Morales, Zenki Co and Sonia Olivares

MILF Rubio, Vivian Lo and Annbil Co

LUCILLE Roberto, Natalia and Trish Villanueva, Maja Olivares Co and Marybeth and Jerry Alikpala

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD



De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde

The Associate Degree in Culinary Arts (ADCA) program allows you to undergo intensive training in all aspects of Culinary Arts. Respected industry professionals will oversee your immersion in culinary theory and adoption of industry trends.

Offered by De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde's School of Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management (SHRIM) in consortium with the Center for Asian Culinary Studies, ADCA also lets you do actual hotel and restaurant services as well as food service catering as part of your training.

Enrollment ongoing for March batch!

Towners, Inc.
HOUSEWARE FABRICS • TRIMMINGS • ACCESSORIES

"Storewide Sale"
January 15 to February 15,2008

SAVE UP TO
50%
on selected upholstery & drapery fabrics

Applicable to Cash and Credit Card transaction

916 A. Arnaiz Avenue, Makati City
Tel Nos.: 844-1238/ 844-5086 Fax No: 843-5297
Email: inquiry@towners.com.ph www.towners.com.ph

CLARKE-ALPARCE NUPTIALS

A dream wedding

IT WAS EVERYTHING Sharon Alparce wanted and more.

Sharon grew up in Boracay. Many, a beautiful town surrounded by pristine beaches and, as expected, she wanted to be wed in a place she loves most—the beach.

After graduating from Ateneo de Manila University, Sharon worked for Ayala AVO where she met her lover Atty. Nicholas Lansdell Clarke, an Australian.

The workaholic Sharon didn't pay much attention at first as she was fully focused on work, work, work and promotion, promotion, promotion.

Alas, fate decided to be more Mature about their destiny as they were thrown, assigned earlier, together in AVO's Singapore office. It was in Singapore where love blossomed between the geeky Nicolaus and the dashing Australian.

Marian and Nick Lansdell-Clarke recently wed at the Holy Rosary Parish on Boracay Island.

Reception followed at Sea Wind Resort, owned by the family of bridesmaid Vera Gorjao Uhigo. Less than a hundred guests were invited, only family and closest friends.

Sharon's mom to be send-off logo boldly, lawyer Rhea Jane must be mad of Nemo.

THE BRIDE'S gown was made by her favorite designer Pete Tenere.

NEWLYWEDS Nick and Sharon Lansdell-Clarke (nee Alparce) on the shores of Boracay.

THE COUPLE with its groomsmen

WITH the bride's mother and brother

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the features, PO. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1261 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required of the wedding but all bride taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

ORTEGA-LIM

Alexis Ortega, son of Antonio and Lucida Ortega, will wed Kathleen Lim, daughter of Wilson and Cristina Lim, on Jan. 19 at the Church of Mary, The Queen, Greenhills, San Juan. Eric Pineda designed the bride's gown using over Mikado silk in a serpentine silhouette. The bodice is embellished with ivory Belgian lace, beaded Spanish lace, cartier beads, iridescent pearlette and lace panels cascading to the chapel train. A double veil of double-width illusion tulle held by floral flourishes to crystal pins completes the ensemble. Reception will follow at the Shaal Ballroom, Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

VISCONDE-NUÑEZ NUPTIAL

Rodel Visconde, son of Ben and Sobre Cruz Clemente Visconde, recently tied the knot with Iris Nuñez, daughter of Rogelio Nuñez and the former Rosalinda Bode Clemente, at St. Ildefonsus Parish Church, Bulacan. Reception was held at Pearl Citta Pavilion Food. Catering was by Amber Events Place. Photos and video coverage was by Dan S. Yñiez of Pixtrilogia Digital, San Ildefonso, Bulacan.

MARIANO-VILLAVENTE

Jeffrey Mariano, son of Edgardo and Amelia Mariano, will tie the knot with Imelda Villaverde, daughter of Florentino and Soledad Villaverde, on Jan. 19, at Sacramento Rosario Parish (LRT Church) in Espana, Manila. Reception will be at Villa Immaculada (Tuason's Grotto), Sacramento, Manila.

BAÑARES-DIO

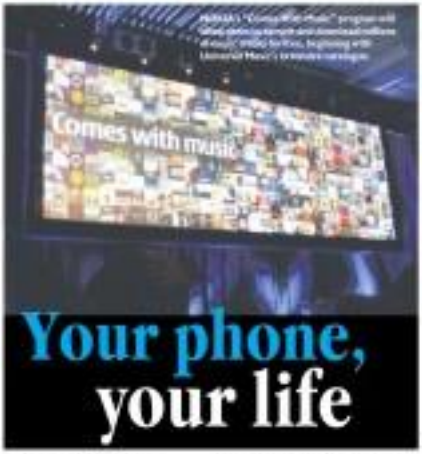
Mark Bernard L. Bañares will wed Filipina C. Dio on Jan. 19 at the Parish of the Divine of Jesus and Mary Most Triumph, QC. Reception will be at St. Charbel Clubhouse, Mindanao Avenue, QC.

RAMOS-DEBLIT

Arnelle Ramos recently celebrated her 18th birthday at the Swimbook Garden in Alabang. She is the daughter of Greg Ramos, general manager of WSB Corp., and the former Cleo Salazar, an entrepreneur.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13, 2008 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER D1

Sunday LIFESTYLE



Your phone, your life

Text and photos by Gilbo Cada

With its 'Comes with Music' program and Ovi platform, Nokia aims for a headstart in the rush to converge mobility and the Internet

IMAGINE A MOBILE PHONE that comes with access to millions of music tracks from a broad range of artists, from mainstream to indie, famous to obscure. And for a period of one year, the user has unlimited access to save and download these songs, after which he or she can keep them—for free.

Sounds too good to be true. So what's the catch?

"There is no catch to the future," assured Jussi Steventalo, product marketing director for multimedia mobile experience of Nokia. "In the second half of 2008, select Nokia models will already carry this program. They can download the music via phone or PC. Approximately 75 percent of Nokia devices sold worldwide already have music players, so this program allows us to give consumers all the music they want, wherever they want it."

The revolutionary program, with the catchy jingle title "Comes With Music," was among a host of innovations that the giant Finnish phone company announced recently at its annual World Conference in Amsterdam, Holland. The most visible ever device that the music feature wasn't an empty boast or a hint designed to jump the gun on competitors was the presence of Lucian Grainge, chairman and CEO of Universal Music International, who announced that his company had signed on as Nokia's first partner in the program.

"Many people search for music on Google than health, money or other topics," said Grainge, explaining the partnership. "It's second only to sex. For many people, music is more important than movies or television. So it's just fitting that we 'Comes With Music,' the world's largest handset company and the world's largest music company are together."

Universal's record labels worldwide represent artists as diverse as Akon, Mary J. Blige, Black Eyed Peas, Stevie Wonder, Shania Twain, Melissa Etheridge, Bryan Adams, Elton John, Amy Winehouse, Mcag, Jacky Cheung, Michael Mcdonald, Herself's no, Engelbert, 112, Rihanna, Mariah Carey, Sheryl Crow, Kanye West, Lionel Richie and Elton Rull.

For Steventalo, the program is a dream deal that will redefine the way people purchase and consume music. "In theory, it's worth two million euros," he said.

That figure is based on the fact that in the Nokia Music Store in the United Kingdom, a song sells for 1 euro, while an album goes for 10 euros. The store carries more two million songs at present, all of which will become available for downloading under the "Comes With Music" program.

While Steventalo and other Nokia executives declined to reveal the planned retail prices of Nokia devices that will carry the feature, they said the new models will not be at premium prices, in keeping with Nokia's strength as a brand that built its name on value-for-money accessibility, ease of use and practicality.

Driving force

"Sheer fun, innovation and collaboration" is the current mantra of Nokia, and the driving force behind innovations like the "Comes With Music" program. As Nokia president and CEO Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo put it, "The future is mobile"—and not just mobile, but one that's "personalized and localized."

"By year 2010," said Kallasvuo, "Nokia would have shipped out 300 million units capable of streaming media, entertainment and communications. Our new products are designed to meet the challenges of the Internet era."

There are currently three billion mobile users worldwide, with Nokia said to own 39 percent of the market. Of these, around 40 percent use their phones as cameras and more than 80 percent browse the Net on their handsets. Some five billion applications are also downloaded on mobile phones.

The challenge, said Kallasvuo, is how to marry consumers' behavior with technology. Giving them the kind of unlimited music experience they want via "Comes With Music" is one way. Integrating their mobile phones more closely with their online lives is another.

"Your phone is always with you, and in time it becomes more than just a gadget," explained Steventalo. "It becomes a life recorder," since it accompanies you in your life rabbit, storing your memories and keeping track of your activities."

One-stop shop

Collecting all these disparate activities—games, music, video and television, contacts, photos, maps, Internet connections—into one unified platform is the mission of Ovi, another Nokia offering set to roll out in 2008.

Ovi, which means "door" in Finnish, is a website (www.ovi.com) that Nokia hopes will become "a dashboard to a person's life." The site, currently in beta form, promises to integrate a user's mobile, PC and Web environments "into an easy-to-use experience with common user interface elements that provide consistency and simplicity," explained Anssi Vanjoki, executive vice president and general manager of Nokia Multimedia.

In practical terms, Ovi will act as a one-stop shop for consumers in storage and share content as well as connect with other users. One can buy music, upload pictures, download applications, create con-

from A1

Mindful yet mindless

By Queenie N. Lee-Chua

Once our brain makes up its mind on something, it forgets about arguments to the contrary

IN 1998, AFTER REPORTING children who had died of cancer, Dr. Alan Sherzai wrote a paper against X-rays the scientist that just a single X-ray of an unborn baby doubled the risk of childhood cancer.

But the medical community was not prepared to change its views.

By 1977, lots of research already showed links between X-rays and cancer. Incredibly, the US National Council on Radiation Protection still insisted that X-rays did no harm. It even said that doctors were doing a good job... doctors were. X-raying babies when they already exhibited symptoms of cancer.

By 1980, studies warning against X-rays became so numerous that most US medical associations finally recommended restricting radiation from routine pregnancy check-ups. Today, of course, pregnant women are not given X-rays. Who knows how many children's lives would have been saved if [illegible] advice had been taken seriously only so?

Fighthead brain

It is tempting to blame doctors, but they are still human, according to psychologists, all of us have at one point been guilty of bias. We tend to believe things that confirm our ideas, and dismiss things that run counter to what we hold dear.

For instance, people either in favor of or against the death penalty were asked to analyze two studies. The first study showed that the death penalty deterred crime; the second study said otherwise. Not surprisingly, people who were in favor of the death penalty in the first place said that the first study was more valid, and those in the other camp found the second study favorable.

In her eye-opening book, "A Mind of Its Own," psychologist Cordelia Fine of the University of Melbourne in Australia attributes this stubbornness to what she calls our "pigheaded brain." Once our brain makes up its mind on something, it forgets about arguments to the contrary.

Fine writes, a student asked me help regarding a romantic relationship. Her boyfriend was abusing her. After some counseling, she resolved to break things off. But after a few days, she changed her mind. Because, she explained, "he's not always like that." Then, she said that it was not as bad as the bad thoughts.

My student was a victim of the battered-person syndrome. The physically and emotionally abused partner flings off hope, smile, and returns to their significant other, all the while believing that the abuse can eventually stop. I used to think that this was "mushy" behavior, but something else is at work—the pigheaded brain.

Focusing on the pros

In 1991, psychologists Stephanie Tasker and Peter Dalgleish asked two groups of students on decision-making. The first group was asked to think about a decision they had already made, and to judge whether they had done the right thing. The second group was asked to think about a problem they had yet to resolve. Both groups wrote down their thoughts as they did the task.

Afterward, the psychologists again discovered the all-too-familiar human brain at work. The second group, who still had to resolve their dilemma, were trained, weighing the advantages and disadvantages of each possible action. But the first group, who had already made their decision, listed mainly the advantages of doing so. That is, members had asked them to take the time to carefully judge their choice, but instead of dwelling on the cons, they stressed the pros. They also jotted down irrelevant thoughts (such as "The researcher is pretty"), in order to censor negative or doubts that could prove their wrong.

When my student had made up her mind to stay in an abusive relationship, she decided to focus on the positives ("Being with him made me feel better"), rather than the negatives ("I get beaten up"). To bolster her self-esteem, she tried her best not to entertain any negative thoughts about her decision.

Shaping reality

The power of beliefs can shape reality in a controversial study in 2001, psychologists Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson gave a group of children a false intelligence test. Then they told the schoolteachers that some kids would become smarter in the coming month. Whether or not those kids were really smarter than the rest of the kids, they became smarter. They had been chosen randomly from the class.

But when the teachers were told which students would get bursts better, it could behold those students did indeed become better! Their grades shot up, and their performance improved significantly.

Why? Because teachers reported them to do better. Rosenthal said that teachers "teach more and teach it more warmly" to students they believe they expected more.

The lesson is also true. If teachers do not believe that certain students can do well, then those students most likely will not do well. "It's extraordinary to consider what a powerful impact a teacher's particular prejudices and stereotypes must have on [the] child," Fine says. "And the prophecy is not only self-fulfilling, it's self-perpetuating as well. When [a student] unknowingly fulfills the teacher's belief that 'Boys don't like reading,' that belief will become yet more comfortably established in the teacher's mind."

So, students, strive to create good impressions on your teachers, and hack those up with solid performance.

For more of the brain and its quirks, read "A Mind of Its Own," by Cordelia Fine, available at [illegible]

Fun run today kicks off Cancer Awareness Week

THE BAPHAMOS MC 3000 E SA Pilipinas (B3000'), an umbrella organization of all cancer-support groups in the country will hold "Walk the Mo," the first run under the University of the Philippines Diliman Garden in Diliman, Quezon City, on Jan. 13, 7 a.m.–11 a.m.

The run will be led by "running priest," Fr. Robert Reyes.

It is in celebration of the National Cancer Consciousness Week.

The day will also be highlighted by a mini-forum on cancer and nutrition by Dr. Rolando de Villa and a poster-making contest for individuals and families to be judged by artists and art therapists Chrisp Abad Santos, Mona Sukasuk, Mayel Cardapan, Joyce Reyes and Honour Yu.

According to BMP's president, writer-teacher Vim Nadera, the criteria will involve around this year's national theme, "Cancer as Friends, Healthy Lifestyle and Nutrition."

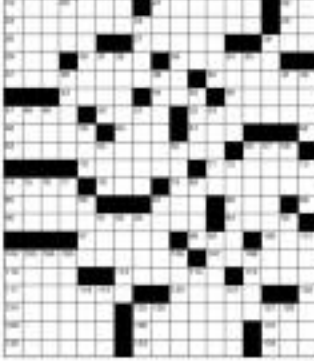
Throughout the week, free cancer checkup and cancer-related seminars will be held at the East Avenue Medical Center.

Call 9226578 or 9289811 local 580.

Sunday Crossword

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

PLAY



cannot escape C2

ROOTS AND WINGS
Cathy Babao-Cabello

Protecting your kids' health

TWO THINGS I CONTINUE TO BE grateful for are the gifts of family and good health.

As parents, our greatest night many always comes in the form of children and loved ones who fall ill. To get our 2008 off to a healthy and bright start, here are some of the top children's health concerns we need to watch out for this year.

Here are some of the top children's health concerns we need to watch out for this year

Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society of the Philippines (PIDSP), an umbrella organization of all cancer-support groups in the country will hold "Walk the Mo," the first run under the University of the Philippines Diliman Garden in Diliman, Quezon City, on Jan. 13, 7 a.m.–11 a.m.

The run will be led by "running priest," Fr. Robert Reyes.

It is in celebration of the National Cancer Consciousness Week.

The day will also be highlighted by a mini-forum on cancer and nutrition by Dr. Rolando de Villa and a poster-making contest for individuals and families to be judged by artists and art therapists Chrisp Abad Santos, Mona Sukasuk, Mayel Cardapan, Joyce Reyes and Honour Yu.

According to BMP's president, writer-teacher Vim Nadera, the criteria will involve around this year's national theme, "Cancer as Friends, Healthy Lifestyle and Nutrition."

Throughout the week, free cancer checkup and cancer-related seminars will be held at the East Avenue Medical Center.

Call 9226578 or 9289811 local 580.

Dr. Babao-Cabello is a pediatrician and a mother of two. Send your questions and comments to her at [illegible]

"STAR WARS" Stormtroopers drumming up interest in the new movie in Ayala, on an outdoor dirt pour

OVI Learn, new in beta form but a portal that Nokia hopes will become "a dashboard to a person's life." (Right) Nokia president/CEO Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo addressing some 2,700 international delegates to the Nokia World Conference in Amsterdam

Your phone, your life

From page D1

tacts, back up and synchronize PC contents, and access different media streams on the site via a single system, all tightly integrated with one's Nokia phone.

"From your camera, you can upload right away to Flickr, which is now part of Ovi," said Sivonkumo. "You can sync your phone contacts so you'd have backup in case you lose your phone. You can update your Myspace page or upload a video on YouTube. Ovi will also come with maps, so you can use your phone as a navigation with pinpoint routes downloaded on your mobile."

Partners who have signed on to Ovi include such popular online networks as LinkedIn, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube and MySpace.

"Integrating Nokia phones with Ovi is material reflection," said Sivonkumo. "Now you don't have to buy separate items for music, for photos and videos, or maps, etc."

Mainstream choice

As wireless broadband becomes universal and more applications proliferate, converged devices (internet-capable phones) are predicted to become the mainstream choice among consumers. By 2009, Nokia sees some four billion phone subscribers worldwide. Today, half of the world's population is already subscribed, with 63,000 new subscriptions added in the last hour alone.)

Capturing a significant portion of that staggering number is no easy task, but Nokia hopes its vision for the mobile industry will do the trick.

"It's all about simplicity," said Sinjalo. "Your phone should be able to provide you a complete, unified experience. While Nokia will continue to be a device company, on top of that we will go as services approximates. And there, simplicity is the key to success."

E-mail the author at gmalit@inquirer.com.ph, visit www.gilbencalit.com

Sto. Niño exhibit and procession Jan. 17-27

THE CONCEPCION DEL SANTISIMO NOMbre del Niño Jesus will hold a special exhibit of some 600 Sto. Niños, Jan. 17-26, at 2/F Philippine National Bank, Macapagal Avenue, Pasay City.

A grand procession will be held Jan. 27 from the Philtrade grounds to Luneta Grandstand. Some 250 holy images are expected to be mounted on carosas.

Among the images to be on display are Jose Sunday's II Niño Victorioso; Rough Santo sculptor Encosierra, it is three feet tall and made of old wood. The Image carries a cross with the WHo Rag.

Also on exhibit is the Holy Child of Love acquired in Bohol. The image is about eight inches tall with an ivory face.

Arthur Borja's Sto. Niño Negro came from an Ateneo in the Mt. Province. It is almost two feet high and made of a 100-year-old wood.

Tiko director Mel Chionglo owns the first four-year-old Santo Niño Mapuwad de Obermagan done by Iloki, Ilocanoga artist Willie Layug.

Dominic Ochoa acquired the 16-inch iconic Sto. Niño de Leyte. Made from an ancient piece of an old house, it was acquired from Niño Macapagal who hails from Samar. Its body, clothes, slippers, crown and scepter are all in bronze.

The congregation was founded 20 years ago by fashion designer Ben Farrales. Today it has some 35 members, including those based abroad.

Current officers are Jing Claus, chair; Ricky Miranda, president; Chito Rogers, vice president; Jesse Dell, secretary; and Mel Chionglo, treasurer.

Overall chair of this year's fiesta is Dra Sherlan Vice chair is Dominic Ochoa.

Registration is on Jan. 14-16, at 9 a.m.-7 p.m., at the PNB main office lobby; 5205126 or 5220132.

[EEEE Hall, Ricky Miranda, Ben Farrales, Chito Rogers and Mel Chionglo. Second row: Dennis Manarao, Nelia Plaza, Gastro Maldonado, Sherwin Lowe, Dan Pundar and Bonnie Ondoni. Last row: Abraham de Castro, Art Borja, Albert Zabala and Tessy Bayoda

LG Electronics

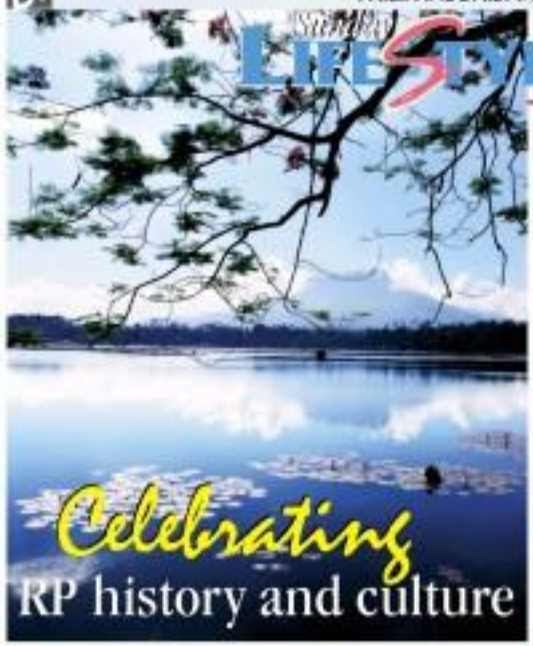
Everything fresh and clean!

LG Washing Machines take good care of your clothes.

With a special fabric protection system that keeps clothes looking fresh and brand-new, wash after wash.

Life's Good

LG Electronics Philippines



Sunday LIFESTYLE Travel

Celebrating RP history and culture

KUSINA: Talisé

LAKE: Sampaloc (left) and Hacienda Cuse San Pablo

HAVE A TASTE OF LIFE outside the sprawling Hacienda Escudero through Viaje del Sud.

The Viaje del Sud itinerary covers antique stores, orchid farms, ancient caves, adventure, homegrown restaurants and spatial resorts.

In the past two years, it has attracted local and foreign tourists and, no, lovers looking for a rejuvenating weekend.

Viaje del Sud includes a visit to Casa San Pablo, a 14-room inn with stilt-and-thatch bungalows and modern and multifloored suites. It features capiz windows, earth colors, tribal fabrics, bird cages, Ilgo signature clay fish and leaves on the floor and wall.

Intricate works of everyday objects by Ifugao John Cabangon are among the guests' favorites, but Casa San Pablo owner Rocco Almonacid showcases the pieces with works by BenCabre that are for sale.

Meals are mini buffets of Laguna homecooking including a native salad of onion and tomato, adobo sa gata, crispy fried dilis, and prawns in gingered T-Up broth.

At Kusina Talisé for lunch or dinner, California-schooled chef Paul Webster offers modern Pinoy cuisine, traditional Filipino fare with a modern twist.

There is seafood fare-luxe topped with caviarean rebounds; the Bisaggo bundes, pork belly cooked adobo-style with brown sugar, pennies, cane and topped with crispy onion rings; and lumpia belly stuffed with grilled eggplant and tomatoes, ingoong smothered with butter and soy sauce.

Pilar's Plants and Novelties is not just an shop-only store. It also sells antique furniture, collectible glassware, ethnic woodwork, tribal clothes, building pieces like old wood lattice frames and capiz windows, as well as edible pasalubong like beans.

Liga Baguio, Weber's Garden is both a showroom and atelier of the pottery by Carlito's Pitchabay, former businessman and nonconformist turned-sculptor Carlito Ortega seven lions into impressive figures of indigenous tribal practices. His garden features a vast P80,000 palm.

The more adventurous can join Mandy Machlis's seven-hour tour of San Pablo City, including a raft ride on Danglis Lake toward a small hill containing Pinaltic from its twin, Pandin.

Capping the tour is a visit to Villa Escudero, where visitors get to experience a rural farm with lunch buffet at Lahuris Falls, carabao and jeepney ride, coconut harvesting demonstration, tour of rural village and museum, and a craft and show.

Hacienda Escudero is in San Pablo, Laguna.

PILAR'S: Plants and Novelties sells antiques and ethnic collectibles

Travel Briefs

Sinulog Mardi Gras Festival

Plantation Bay Resort and Spa, one of Cebu's most renowned resort-hotel destinations, joins Cebu's Sinulog (March) festival by providing complimentary transportation and lunch to guests who will be participating in the celebration. Dance performances by the Cebuanos will take place. One of the highlights of the festival is a parade on Jan. 19. Call the Cebu office at (63-32) 3409000 or fax (63-32) 3409007, and Manila office at (63-2) 8498024-26 or fax (63-2) 8498028. Or log on to www.plantationbay.com

Suite Escape

Stay in one of the Hyatt Belmont/Casino Manila's Regency Suites and take pleasure in a range of pampering indulgences in total seclusion. Book now and get an access to the exclusive Regency Club Lounge offering pre-dinner cocktails and an all-day coffee and tea service, a choice of continental breakfast in the Regency Club Lounge or buffet breakfast for two at Blanket Café, unlimited access to Club Oasis fitness center, free use of the outdoor pool and your choice of selected one-hour standard treatments for two at the spa in Club Oasis. The package also includes dinner for two at Li Li Chinese Restaurant or The Fireplace and Dinner in a P2,100 Bonus Bet Coupon for use in the casino. Call 2451200.

'Specialists' on fam tour

North American travel agents touring Manila, Bohol, Cebu, Palawan and Dumaguete as part of the Department of Tourism's Philippine Specialist Program. Thirty agents from 18 US states and two Canadian provinces.

"Philippine Specialists," joined the Chocolate Hills in Bohol and Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, as well as different beach and cities destinations in Bohol, Cebu and Palawan. They also receive courtesy call on Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano and Planning and Promotions Undersecretary Estrella Jacque Jr. The specialist program is a DOT online educational program for travel agents in North America that introduces participants to major Philippine tourism destinations.

Soothing 'holy water'

Tirta Spa, the new tourist destination on Boracay Island, sits on a hill overlooking Crocodile Island and Sibuyan Sea. Its name means 'holy water' in Hindu. Tirta features a blend of Filipino, Indian, Thai and Indonesian techniques and sets. Tirta Spa is in Bitin Makahoyo, Manoc-Manoc, Boracay Island; 6336-3503450 or 0920-8626288; www.tirtaspa.com

NATURE AT ITS BEST

Here's a memorable weekend: the turquoise way in Coron. Aside from the vast blue sea, rock mountains and lush vegetation, there is a jewel of a place called the Maquinit Hot Spring. A two-road network initiated by Gov. Joel Reyes makes the spring more accessible. Nearby in Siete Pecados, seven islets that form a wide variety of marine life. Coin Mountain is a massive dark-gray limestone formation within the Twin Lagoon featuring inner and outer bodies of water connected by a cave-like entrance. A trek leads to Cayangan lake (PHOTOS, 424 (IFC) or 891-2134(IE)).

Sunday LIFESTYLE

New home, new art

To businessman Edgar Lim's delight, abstract paintings by Fred Ramirez, Sanso, and National Artists H.R. Ocampo and Arturo Luz instantly add warmth and character to his modern home

Text by Alex T. Vergara
Photos by Chris Nicha

BUSINESSMAN Edgar Lim was never into collecting art until he moved with his wife Phyllis and their kids Elmer and Ienky sometime last year to their newly built home. The place features, among other elements, a koi pond set on a manicured garden in one of Quezon City's exclusive villages.

But his older brother Joseph, an avid art collector, convinced him to try buying a few art pieces. So his delight, abstract paintings by Fred Ramirez and Sanso and National Artists H.R. Ocampo and Arturo Luz instantly added warmth and character to his modern home designed by architect Billy de Dios.

Lim also later invested in a number of sculptures by Ramon Orlina, Jay Colina and Michael Cacnio that are now displayed in the spacious living room and office, which he shares with his wife.

"I never really had the time to sit down and seriously appreciate works of art until my buyer told me that they'd go well with my new home," says Lim. "He's right, because they really do."

Apart from his brother, he also sought the advice of veteran art dealer Rosy Herrera, one of the owners of a Makati-based gallery called Chatee Esperanto. Cecilia Estanislao-Bilog, Jupiter Gomez's.

After Herrera showed Lim a wide range of choices and possibilities, the reluctant art collector

NEW HOME, E2

Dreaming of your own *Spa Business?*

* **Fresh** Spa Concept
* Spa **for Everyone**
* **Below 1M** Investment
* 50 Sq. Mtr **Minimum Space**
* Franchising **Nationwide**

BIG APPLE EXPRESS SPA
Your Own Spa Business for Less Stress and Low Investment

FRANCHISE HOTLINE (02) 451-1491 to 93 / 0919027

Our Promo, **ROOM** for as low as **P1,450+** per person on twin sharing
INCLUSIONS:
-Room accommodation
-Full Buffet Breakfast at La Jardin Restaurant
-Use of Facilities / Swimming Pool & Gym

PROMO VALIDITY: For all Check-in from P2,750++

City Garden Hotel

BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX
SWISS WATCHES • L.V. BAGS
JEWELRY • DIAMONDS
BEST PRICE IN TOWN!!!
SPOT CASH
3829198
8341572
0917-8141987
MANILA WATCH & JEWELRY

Take advantage of the Global Opportunity! become a World-Class Chef today!
GLOBAL ACADEMY
Grand Diploma in Professional Culinary, Baking & Pastry Arts
Diploma in Professional Culinary Arts
Diploma in Professional Baking and Pastry Arts
Certificate in Basic Professional Cooking
Certificate in Basic Professional Baking and Pastry
Chef Rob Pengson

Congratulations to the incoming De La Salle Freshmen
EGI Taft Tower
(Beside De La Salle University)
Php 14,700/sq.m.
READY FOR OCCUPANCY
E. GANZON, INC.
(02) 522-2525 / 567-0659
552-0260 / 552-0261

Enjoy life in a new form.
WeRoam comes FREE with Apple MacBooks
Apple MacBook 13-inch 2.0GHz | PHP 65,999
Apple MacBook Pro 15-inch 2.2GHz | PHP 139,999
WeRoam

New home art

SCULPTURAL staircase with glass steps set on a stainless steel frame provides the living room with the ultimate focal point.

FURNITURE pieces were sourced from the likes of B&B Italia and other high-end stores to complement minimalistic artworks by Artists Lee and company.

POWDER room with stained glass window

PHYLLIS Lee, Edgar's better half, with their daughter Isabel

THE PUBLIC area's dominant color scheme of black and white is relieved by the furniture as well as art pieces. The wooden sculpture above it is by Joy Cerva.

From page E1

ter finally settled on several distinct pieces by Lee and company, which he felt complemented rather than overpowered the streamlined Italian furniture pieces he was planning to buy.

Like most modern designs, the three-story structure (it has a basement leading to the garage and maids' quarters) is a subtle play on textures, shades and materials, particularly steel, glass, stone and concrete.

SCHEMATIC kitchen in neutral shades gets a dash of color from the stained-glass ceiling accent.

Zen flavor

Changes, indeed, are in order, but they can also be abrupt as seen in the sprawling ground floor. While the raised area leading to the dining room and kitchen is made of distressed looking, two-foot-thick tiles, the lower portion, which hosts the living room, is bifurcated from cream-colored stone tiles.

In keeping with the interior's Zen-inspired flavor, the Lees sought heeded interior designer Vince Lozano's advice to refrain from choosing ornate furniture and accessories. Instead, he reminded them to keep it simple and a bit linear and geometric to echo the architect's original intent.

Contrary to common perception, Lee insists that it's easy to maintain such a seemingly uncomplicated look. He also dismisses the misconception that a minimalist style is synonymous to cold and boring.

"A modern setup requires judicious use of furniture and accent pieces," he concedes. "But you can keep it interesting by mixing things up. An abstract painting here, a statement furniture piece there should do it. The key to making it work is in the right coordination of elements, from the walls and tiles down to the windows and glass."

a curved interior wall, for instance, lushes as if it's made of textured accent slabs. In truth, however, it achieved its rough, weathered look courtesy of Jilukon, one of many shades available from Nippon paints.

"After having the wall painted," says Lee, "Jackson Jabs accentuated it by brushing it with black paint...No-wax can give just a curved sink of sheer this size except by simulating the look."

Going bold

Lee also swears by the wisdom of keeping visible areas open to sunlight through big glass windows that are tempered by remote-controlled roll-up blinds. The need for privacy, in this case, can be achieved with a mere touch of a button.

"To further achieve an illusion of openness, I recommend that you use light colors on walls, preferably white," he says.

Thanks to the living room's high ceiling and rainwater walls that host several huge glass windows, Lee easily achieved the idea of openness without resorting to any form of illusion. Instead of going for a huge chandelier — another no-no in the book — he settled for a series of pin lights, a couple of sleek lighting fixtures dangle from the ceiling of the stairwell and foyer.

He deliberately chose to break his own rules in the dining area by going bold with an accent wall made of double thickness glass behind another sheet of clear glass. Rainier's abstract painting of what appears like a white ant with gold-en rays provides a stark contrast to the red background.

The ground floor's ultimate focal point, however, is the staircase made of tempered glass steps—including a runway landing—set on a sturdy looking stainless steel frame. Lee had it sandwiched between slabs of ¾-inch thick glass just to make sure that each step is strong enough to carry even a heavy person's weight and withstand constant traffic. To prove his point that the completed structure is as strong as granite, he repeatedly jumps on one of the steps near the base of the stairs.

Truly, not only can a minimalist aesthetic appear warm and interesting, but with the right materials, it's also easy to maintain and withstand the test of time.

ARCHITECT Edy de Dios designed this floor accent, which complements the Italian-made glass chair above, from scraps of tiles and glass.

HIGH-CEILINGED living room, huge glass windows and linear furniture pieces make for a modern Asian home.

THE HOME'S contemporary flavor is underscored by a painting by Lee.

ETHNIC DESIGNED throw pillows are great home accents

THESE antelope are popular collectible items for their artsy designs

WOVEN wall hangings

Showcase of Filipino culture

REED pillow and blinds are dominant colors in Igorot textiles.

WOODEN bowls, trays and containers from the Visayas

MODERN figurative sculptures show Asian's finish

THE UPLANDS OF NORTHERN LUZON are host to a rich and dynamic culture that highlights the artistry of the different indigenous tribes in the area—the Igorots, Ifugao, Kankanaey, Bontoc, and Ibontoc. They are known for their wonderful traditions in basketry, wood carving, woven fabrics, and accessories.

But you don't have to trek up the mountains to appreciate these ethnic crafts. A trip to Baliuag Filipino reveals the rich cultural traditions of northern Philippines. Here are some great finds:

In the basket. If Bol Indians traditionally serve the needs of households like rearing swine and food like rice, beans and coffee, baskets are also used for keeping household utensils, clothes and personal belongings. These are usually fashioned from rattan because of its durability; these baskets can also be used as back packs when working on the terraces or when farming.

While these beautifully crafted baskets are still used for their original functions today, these have since gone mainstream, and have become an interior designer's delight for an eclectic chamber home. It's amazing how these can perk up a bare corner or make an interesting centerpiece.

Wood works. Nature plays a great role in the Igorots' culture, with passages marked by rituals and religious ceremonies. Being an agrarian people whose survival once depended on the rice they grew on their mountain terraces, the Bulol or the Igorot rice god is a popular sculpture.

Beyond religious sculptures, northern tribes have also become known for their wood awake bowls, storage containers, utensils, and weapons with animal, floral and religious motifs. Baliuag Filipino highlights wooden crafts in mahogany, narra, and molave that look great in modern settings as well as in more original mountain origins.

Woven wonders. The Igorots are known for their exquisitely woven fabrics fashioned into jackets, blankets, skirts, and accessories. These fabrics are also fashioned into table runners, placemats, wall hangings, bed linens, throw pillows, clothing, bags, wallets, and even area rugs.

Ethnic contrasts. Upland tribes have woven beaded jewelry as a means of adorning their metal in the community. Baliuag Filipino brings this tradition to contemporary times with a collection inspired by Igorot accessories. Made of glass and plastic, these beads are colorful, stylish and functional. Some will look great in any modern wardrobe.

The call of the Caribbean. Baliuag Filipino also has a collection of bags and T-shirts from Madrevé with photographic images of the Caribbean region. Intertwined to bags and T-shirts. The photographic motifs taken from 1934 to 1936 and today are regarded as valuable documentation of the indigenous culture of the Caribbean people.

Baliuag Filipino has branches at SM Makati, SM Megamall, the Block at SM City North Edsa, and SM Mall of Asia.

Plant sale ongoing

GREEN 2000 GARDEN CENTER IS holding a big inventory sale until Feb. 5 at the Manila Seedling Bank Environmental Center, Edsa corner Quezon Avenue, QC.

The store is open 9 a.m.-6 p.m. On sale are pots, garden tools, fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides, potting media, and fascinating finds, both culinary and medicinal, include stevia, gynostemma, lavender, mint, basil and mulberries.

Landscape and garden exhibit

THE PHILIPPINE HORTICULTURAL Society, Inc. and the Manila Seedling Bank Environmental Center Foundation will hold a grand landscape and garden exhibit Horticulture 2008 with the theme "Tropical Convergence: Native Plants and Foreign Introductions at Greenhouse 2 of the Manila Seedling Bank Environmental Center in Quezon Ave. cor. EDSA, Quezon City on Jan. 26 to Feb. 4.

The schedule of lectures and speakers are as follows: Jan. 26—Feng Shui & Bonsai Secrets in the Garden by Chad Alexander; Jan. 27—Italini (Bonsai in Tiny Landscape) The Art of Stone (Suiseki) Appreciation, by S. Dapic; Jan. 28—Landscaping, Fred Ballad; Jan. 29—Beginners Orchid Culture, Jun Gabanes Jr.; Jan. 30—Bonsai in the Tropics, Joyce Razo; Jan. 31—Basic Landscaping, Jerome Flores, Feb. 1—Propagation of Adenium, Tempie Co, Feb. 2—Modern Tropical Design, Ajay Lilloza and Plant Art - Tere Lauden, Tompion Mirilla, Feb. 3—Culture and Propagation of Ferns, Jun Gabanes Jr., Feb. 4—Growing Orchids, Ot Lazaro.

EMILY'S POST
Emily Marcelo

Husband disrespects her parents

DEAR EMILY,

I am married and have two daughters.

My husband and I have the ensuing arguments about my family, especially whenever money is involved.

Right now, my parents live with us because my mother takes care of my two kids since my husband and I both work.

My dad just lost his job. I wanted to give my parents money during the Christmas season but my husband did not want me to do it.

He thinks it is his concern; would not do us harm and, at the same time, it was my just moneyin Dam.

I do not know why my husband treats my parents that way. I know it has something to do with money and it is sad that it is still evident in his mind all this time.

How will I tell him to respect my parents for my sake and my kids?

SAD MOM

What is it about forgiveness that turns some people's brains to mush?

Does he ever go to church on Sunday or whatever day of the week it is when he attends a homily on prayer? If he does, he just can be go on hearing it and ask for forgiveness when the very thoughts is alien to him?

Let us say for argument's sake, that your parents squandered thousands of his hard-earned money and still have not paid. Is that reason enough to treat them badly, even inconsiderately all this time?

Money can be earned, borrowed or stolen. And it will still be only money. But good manners is something else.

We should be angry or down if he sees them living off his money and spending obscenely like there is no tomorrow.

But if they are still in your house, in your home, then, something somewhere must have gotten mentally wrong.

Four facts are so startling, but I am going out on a limb here. Your parents may have borrowed your husband's money or start a business of their own, or acted as conduit for some other people—all of which must have turned out badly.

Such things happen. But to remain angry all this time is a waste of energy and emotion.

You are right in your wish that he treats them a bit nicer for you and your kids' sake. He should realize that it is only reputable he should please and adhere to grace—not anger.

It is counterproductive, totally useless and already bad for the health and marriage.

E-mail the author at *emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph*. Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letter to Inquirer.net 5th floor, Inquirer.net program "Balitaan ni Hjdaya," 7:30-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, or chat@ 3:30-5 PM.

PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Barcia

Banneaux marks 75th year of Mary's apparition

VIRGIN of the Poor

THE CITY OF BANNEAUX IN Belgium will hold a year-long celebration of the 75th anniversary of the first apparition of the Virgin of the Poor on Jan. 15, 1933 to Mariette Beco.

The event will be celebrated by devotees all over the world and the Philippines, especially the Parokya ng Birhen ng Mga Dukha in Pilar, Bicutan, Taguig which is holding its fiesta today.

Mila Dolores, who is translating the history of the apparition from French to English, said she intended to write a second book on how the apparition related to the firstpeace. To be included in the book are testimonies of miracles in Tagalog when Fr. Erich Blanquaert visits parish priest.

Mila is praying that she will find a publisher. Those interested to help can e-mail mejdolores@yahoo.com. Dr. Ia is the only Filipino volunteer to work in the renowned shrine of the Virgin of the Poor in Banneaux.

In Mila's first book, "Virgin of the Poor: a Tribune of her Filipino Children," she said Mary Mary Refuela, who studied in Louvain, dedicated his priesthood to the Virgin of the Poor.

Celebration

The 75th anniversary of the eight apparitions of the Virgin to Mariette, then 13 years-old, will be officially opened on Jan. 13 by Msgr. Aloysius Jousten, bishop of Liege. During the first apparition, Our Lady gestured to the child to approach. Msgr. Jousten Gerrand, bishop of Namur, will celebrate the Mass at 11:30 in Paul Cathedral in Liege.

Banneaux's 75th anniversary logo eloquently expresses Our Lady's message: Mary leads us to Jesus. The silhouette of the Virgin of the Poor tenderly watches over the small chapel that she requested in 1933. Spiraling waves flows in a circle, representing the earth. The spring, symbol of her Son Jesus, is renewed for all nations.

Our Lady called people to faith and asked for prayers; in return she promised to relieve their sufferings. Now after 75 years, her message remains relevant. We are all poor (materially, mentally, physically, spiritually). Let us entrust ourselves to the Virgin of the Poor and receive the graces of peace and comfort.

Triduum of the sick

The poor today are at home in Banneaux. Every year, pilgrims come, notably during the weekly Triduum of the Sick (arrive Friday, leave Tuesday) to tell Our Lady their poverty, suffering, pain and needs.

They entrust themselves to the Mother of the Savior and express their confidence and hope in Jesus. The novices desire to guide their hearts into the secret mystery of love, source of all graces. They come to find comfort, courage, hope, and union with God.

Tape

The Pink Sisters sing in the spirit of the Virgin of the Poor. Fr. Jose Evangelista interprets in both English and French. Mila gave me the tape in 2009. I found it again this week and now I listen every morning.

And how Mila produced the tape is a miracle in itself. The audio-cassette tape is available at Lourdes Mila named by Lord Sincere and her late husband Edison.

Local Crafts (82 20th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City; tel. 9130305), manufacturer of rosary religious articles, is a one-stop shop of Virgin of the Poor products. Like Mila's book, painting by Leon Jamin, etc.

Mila said all but one of the songs in the tape were recorded in convents of the Pink Sisters throughout the country under the direction of Rose Murillo, their musical director. "Hymn to Mary" is a translation of the Hymn of Mary Gelsomino modello. I translated the prayers from Fondeva English," Mila said.

Ina's feast

The feast day of Ina Poon Bato, patroness of Bonbon, Zambales, on Jan. 25, is celebrated Jan. 24. Rosalyn Magnaye and other devotees will gather at the Bonbon Gardens in Subic to celebrate the midst of the 40-foot tilma of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Dr. Leah Alcala, an optometrist, took the Hospicada Pharmaceutical Licensure test. Of 33 examinees, only 11 passed, including her. She is now the Ina Poon Bato for her passing a very difficult exam. She remembers putting the Virgin's ostensoria to her chest.

Being healthy

The First and only membership club for health literacy and other benefits was introduced recently by RxPlaza. Launched in November, Rx-Pinoy Wireless Solutions for Health (RxPlaza) aims "to be a Swiss Army knife of health tools that empowers consumers such as other health institutions, and connects them to the best health providers they need," says CEO Ruly B. Ty.

Membership is is now available for only P800 annually.

Miracle

Carol Pajarillo Cachuela, manager of Bank of Commerce branch on U.N. Ave., Ermita, has always been a devotee of Nuestra Mare. She asked Mama Mary to guide her in her job and to help her be a good manager.

In 1997, when she was still manager of the Central Market branch, two women were to her office wanting to withdraw a big amount from their account.

Before she could talk to the women, the phone rang and somebody told her to beware of the women. Apparently, deposits made in their account were not cleared by the depositing bank in Makati.

Carol hurriedly told the women the funds did not have sufficient cash and asked them to return the next day. The women never returned. An investigation showed the unknown boy gave was fictitious.

Carol believes it was the Blessed Mother who called her.

Buddy

GADGET CRAZY? GO ONLINE.

P1 MILLION WORTH OF THE HOTTEST GADGETS TO BE GIVEN AWAY!

Ngayon, mas pinasaya pa ng leader ang **mobile internet browsing** mo!
P10 for every 30 minutes lang, no per kilobyte charging pa!
May chance ka pang manalo ng Sony Playstation 3, Nokia N95 handset,
Ipod Touch, Nintendo Wii or a Macbook. Kaya mag-online na sa iyong
SMART cellphone or use it as a modem for your laptop or desktop.

Free registration – join now!

Via the SMART wapsite http://wap.smart.com.ph/internet
or text INTERNET <name/address/age> and send to 4040

SMART
THE POWER TO LEAD

ENTERTAINMENT

Lito Ermie G. Velarde

MEGA BASH
(Dan Ivanec) a lot to hold her breath about on Thursday night. Even Monday celebrated ng... Sanders (r)

Goodbye Sergio, Hello Vergel

'Marimar' is paired with 'Kamandag' in new Love Day flick

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THERE WAS HIGH SECRECY SURROUNDing GMA Films Regal's new Valentine movie, "My Best Friend's Girlfriend (MBGF)."

The identity of Richard Gutierrez's new leading lady was a tightly guarded bit of information, as it is set to be revealed only today on the Kapuso show "SOP."

Joey Abacan, GMA Films project director, says many big stars were considered, but the plum role went to Marian Rivera, who confirmed to make waves as "Marimar."

Abacan relates that the Valentine playdate has become an unannounced tie for the company.

"In previous years, we had Tal the Love Bespin, "I Will Always Love You" and "The Promise," all top-billed by Richard and Angel Locsin. Since Angel has moved to ABS-CBN, we had to find a new partner for Richard."

To drum up interest in the new tandem, GMA Films launched a text contest for fans to guess who among Jen Calicdan, Brian Ramos, Marlene Magdoza, Jowel Medes, Nadine Samonte and Marian would be paired with Richard, who plays Vergel in the romantic "Kamandag."

And finally on the set, director Mark Reyes says, outsiders were not allowed. "The people in the compound where we shot, even our cast could didn't know that Marian was doing the Richard movie. [I threatened to] kill anyone who'd let the cat out of the bag."

Reyes adds, "I even had to deny information that was leaked prematurely to the press. I hope they understand."

Watch the concert for FREE!

Get a MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE Bundle – a SMART Buddy SIM, P500 load and a concert ticket for only P350!

Or, get GREAT ticket discounts through SMART Wireless Centers (Metro Manila only). Just present your active SMART subscription.

Plus, get a chance to win concert tickets, CDs and MEET & GREET MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE after the show!

Text MCR to 234

and receive the TEENAGERS tone and subscribe to ROCKTONE* – go to http://wap.smart.com.ph/MCR

Nobody knows your EMO needs like SMART Buddy.

VIVA CONCERTS Ticketnet

*P15.00 weekly subscription. Promo duration: Jan. 12-31, 2008. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0164, Series of 2005.
For more information about My Chemical Romance, visit www.smart.com.ph or text SAGOT ASAD to 888 or access SAGOTASAD via wap.smart.com.ph.

SMART THE POWER TO LEAD

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER (MAKATI) TEL. [illegible]
I AM LEGEND PG13
BEE MOVIE G
I AM LEGEND PG13
NATIONAL TREASURE 2
SYDNEY WHITE PG13
NATIONAL TREASURE 2
HOLIDAYS & OTHER DAYS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX
NATIONAL TREASURE
I AM LEGEND
BEE MOVIE
NATIONAL TREASURE
PREMIERE THEATRE
Catch the Cineplex Special
Avail the Shang Cineplex E-save Club Giftcards.
The Perfect Giftcard for the Holiday Season!
Shangri-la Plaza

NOW SHOWING
MAGWAWAGI ANG MGA NAAAPI!
GET ENCHANTED!
Her Seven Dorks
Life is a Fairy Tale.
Amanda Bynes Sara Paxton
Sydney White
...and The Seven Dorks.

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

OPENS SOON!!!

Araneta Center
Gateway
ALI MALL
Cubao Expo
Farmers Plaza
Summer Cool DAZE of '10
EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE
I AM LEGEND
NATIONAL TREASURE
BEE MOVIE
SYDNEY WHITE
NATIONAL TREASURE
MAUL, SMAUL MAGULO
GOLDEN COMPASS
DESPERANDAUX
SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL
ENTENG KABISOTA 4
LARGEST CURVED SCREEN 70 FT WIDE, 30 FT HIGH
ARANETA CENTER EVENTS
GRAND CLEARANCE
SALE
70% OFF
GREAT SELECTIONS CENTERWIDE
JANUARY 4 TO 15

'GSIS Members' Hour'

THE "GSIS MEMBERS' Hour," which airs Fridays, 7 p.m. on HERO 4, addresses various issues concerning the Government Service Insurance System.

The show's latest segment is one that discusses the GSIS Kinabuhayan Fund, a type of mutual fund that combines a stock component, a bond component and a money market component in a single portfolio.

The show was recently awarded an Anak TV Seal by the Southeast Asia Foundation for Children and Television, which cited it for being a "family-oriented and child-sensitive" program.

It won the same award in 2006.

The program is hosted by GSIS lawyer Ilse Hauptain, Joe Zerrudo and HERO's Toby Sebastian.

'Surviving Everest'

National Geographic Channel (NGC) airs "Surviving Everest—A Tribute to Sir Edmund Hillary" tonight at 8:30pm on the 50-year accomplishment of Sir Edmund Hillary.

Hillary was the first conqueror of Mt. Everest who died

"Tell Time" on Hotwire

recently at the age of 88.

The special tribute will be preceded by a 30 min. show that will be aired on Nat Geo Adventures on Jan. 11 at 6 p.m. and Jan. 19 at 11 p.m.

New mix

CLICK!

Velvet, an entertainment channel that offers a mix of news, talk, entertainment, drama, comedy, reality shows and movies, has announced its forthcoming shows for the year.

Leading the line-up is the "2006 Academy Awards" live telecast, per Oscars and the affair parties on Feb. 24.

Velvet has also acquired the exclusive rights to air "Dirt," a drama series with Courtney Cox playing a devious editor; "The Ultras," a pub line led by Barbara Walters; "Stuff," featuring Hank Azaria; the quirky drama, "Three Moons Over Milford," and the dance-reality show, "So You Think You Can Dance."

Channel assignments

Solar Entertainment Corp. has announced new channel assignments for the following Solar Entertainment Channels effective this month: CTV on 8(9) 3; ETC on 10(11) 22; and 2nd Avenue on 8(9) 29.

Lea Salonga stars in Iloilo gig

LEA SALONGA PERforms in a one-night concert on Jan. 19 at the Iloilo Convention Center.

This is the Tony Award winner's first concert in Iloilo and she has brother Gerard as musical director, and the 15-piece Global Strides Orchestra as backup. Special guests in the show are Jed Madela, Gerald Anderson and Angeline Quinto.

Call 8000000191 and 0815.1577662 for tickets; visit the concert booth at SM City Iloilo. For more details, email Sendit: sm.spot@gmail.com.

Piolo and Sam in Cebu

"Thunderbirds in Binalig" features Piolo Pascual and Sam Milby in concert on Jan. 19 at the Waterfront Hotel, Cebu.

Joining them are Orange, John Prats and other surprise guests.

Hugh at Cabana Bar

Hugh Alejandro is the featured performer along with regular band Music Grower at the Cabana Bar on Jan. 20 at 9 p.m.

The Cabana Bar is located in Thunderbird Resorts, Binalinlan Highway, Binalinlan, Bicol. Call 052.480.6888.

'Salitaanak ni Pete'

"Salitaanak ni Pete" presents Dayang Asiong, Cesday Chua, Bernie Tiu, calamu and Arthur Mamaang with Pedie Borja on piano on Jan. 15, 9:30 p.m. at Conspiracy Cafe, 59 Hemjua Ave., Prty. 6, Quezon City.

'Music & Memories'

Carmen Soriano, Jose Mari Chan and Willie

Real Groove at UC Cafe

The band Real Groove plays every Wednesday, 8:30 p.m. for the whole month of January at the Park Cafe, Ekamtwa Hotel, Makati. Call 810.7445 for reservations.

RCS at The Podium

Catch the Philippine Gumboot Singers (RCS) at 5 p.m. today at the Podium and 6 p.m. Jan. 19 at Greenhills.

Tonight

Njoej Velasco at Zirkoh, Timog Ave., Quezon City.

Tomorrow

Kaisaang at Barrio, Annapolis St., Greenhills, Quezon City.

Jan. 16

Johnoy at "The Bistro."

Jan. 20

Chanee Pempengco at Metropolis Mall Alabang.

Jan. 27

Nathan Lanzaderas at Metropolis Mall Alabang.

FROM THE GUY WHO BROUGHT YOU
"THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY"
BEN STILLER
THE HEARTBREAK KID
He waited all his life to get married. Too bad he didn't wait another week.
R-13
IN THEATERS JAN. 16

lo 'Wilyonario' scam–KBP

WILLIE Revillame

Michelle Pfeiffer Paul Rudd

I Could Never Be Your Woman

She's over the hill. He's head over heels.

COMING SOON

NOW SHOWING

SHOW TIME

OPENS JANUARY 16

MTRCB Rating G General Audience | All Ages Admitted

Awkward moments during Mega's birthday show

By the Inquirer Entertainment Staff

THREE-WAY TENSION BACKSTAGE AT THE Araneta Coliseum during Sharon Cuneta's annual birthday concert.

Martin Nievera and Pops Fernandez were among the guest performers.

According to a source, the hunting former spouses were reading barbs via text from separate dressing rooms. One such SMS read: "Tawd tell the press that we're okay. We're not okay."

Okay. Cuneta reboot please that was from!

Awkward moment 2

Same event.

Erstwhile screen partners Judy Ann Santos and Pido Pascual were among the guests as well.

Another source said Pido arrived way after Juday, who was escorted by reel and real-life partner Ryan Agoncillo.

"Sus Ryan and Pido have patched things up," hairst the source.

But Juday and Pido, according to her manager Abbe Lorenzo: And it showed.

Show him the money

Showbusiness chatty that a First time Producer/Controversial Celebrity's big movie one tens of millions.

When the movie was finally shown, BWCE's owner wondered out loud: "Where did all that money go? The movie looks so cheap!"

BWCE asked an industry executive to conduct an external audit. The official finding: The flick had cost only half of the declared amount.

The rumor-finder the culprit is someone close to BWCE.

Grooming Cesar

Rumor has it that Malacañang is grooming Cesar Montano as replacement for Edu Manzano, whose term as head of the Optical Media Board has purportedly ended.

An insider told Rushes that Montano was supposed to assume office last year, but he had to wait for the end of the one-year "ban on candidates who ran in the last elections.

Moustache malfunction

Cleaver out this hairy TV host has a secret.

A Client Guy he tastefully avoids encounters of the third kind in or around Metro Manila.

So he goes all the way to a mall-store psychiatrist to misdiagnose with his boys. Taking extra precautions, he wears a fake moustache.

It worked—until one night, when the fake moustache fell off in the middle of action with a fiend.

The boy immediately recognized CG, who dashed back to the city.

Kept geek

This once Cosby Actor had a stunning makeover, transforming himself into a prime-time hunk.

But with the macho metamorphosis comes nasty talk.

Now, GA is being censored as the boy toy of a ranking official.

Oh, the price of reinvention.

Casting ouch

If you are wondering why talentless brains land plum roles in their network's shows, it's because of ex-Gay Guru.

GG's latest boyfriend recently landed a major project after breaking up with a Pretty Starlet, also talentless.

Now, if you are wondering why PS is getting all the good breaks, it's because she's the apple of a Mother Hen's eye.

Ouch ... oy, ouch!

Naked intruder

LOS ANGELES—A naked intruder who broke into actor Nicolas Cage's waterfront home near Los Angeles last year has been ordered to undergo six months of drug rehabilitation, a judge ruled. Robert Dennis Hays, 46, pleaded guilty to one count of felony stalking during an appearance at Orange County Superior Court in Santa Ana, 30 miles south of LA. Reuters

'Soprano' wedding

LOS ANGELES—James Gandolfini, star of "The Sopranos," is engaged to his girlfriend Deborah Lin. Gandolfini, 46, and Lin, a former fashion model, "got engaged during the holidays," the actor's manager, Mark Armstrong, said in a statement. Reuters

Earthly role for Duchovny

LOS ANGELES—Former "X-Files" star David Duchovny will portray a character grounded in real life in his next program, "Californication." Reuters

Through the years

This week (Jan. 12-19) in show biz history:

1917—**Humphrey Bogart** died of throat cancer. He was 57.

1970—**Diana Ross** performed for the last time with The Supremes, at a show in Las Vegas.

1974—"Happy Days" premiered on ABC.

1975—**Tommy Hadhouney** died in a fall from a hotel window in New York. He was 34. Hadhouney was known for his duets with Roberta Flack.

1986—**Aurora Susana Revil** died. She was 64.

1996—**Lisa Marie Presley** filed for divorce from Michael Jackson.

2006—**Beaumont** re-married **Kim Hudson** in Detroit. He filed for divorce 82 days later.—*WP*

• • •

Top of the tabloids

The top three hits stories in local tabloids this week. (And why we are stunned, if we are stunned.)

• Kris Aquino, resurface ang mo-capital e. This Cory! (And well she should.)

• Kris, nasaan-saan ang milyones pag pumasok sa politika? (Please don't.)

• **Karylle Halili** color reggaeton? (Kinda.)

• **Angelika Dela Cruz**, of no manager sa ABS-CBN? (Shop ding, si Papa Orasan pa'yo.)

Swallow/swallows

• Jennylyn Mercado, ina na nga kay Patrick Garcia.

• Patrick, nangako kay Jennylyn na hindi na magsisigal. (Bisyo pala noon.)

• **Mark** at Jennylyn, mag-down pa rin? (Ah, sensya, gumagamit ng Filipino.)

• "Ito ang nakapagpapagaling ang Lady?"—Hanok

• Jennylyn, gusto ding sakyan ang problema? (Try nalang nyan sandali?)

• Mark, sabi ni pagkabuwis ni Jennylyn? (Who's margaret bun? ...)

• Mark, gusto na gulat sa pagkabuwis ni Jennylyn? (Kuya, hindi.)

• Kasalang Jhe at Jessa mamaday.

• Patrick and Jennylyn nagkabalikan na sa kasalang kasal? (Are for nalaga, ano?)

• Paolo (Contis) Antolong nakingan si Patrick (Saan daw?)

Viral illness

• Pa, ayaw ng isa sa Am dahil sa pagkabuwis ng apat na taon?! (It takes two, mother.)

• Anne Curtis gusto na ring magka-baby! (Kiss time!)

• Paolo Contis, gusto pang humyak a limited TIME PERIOD of the month!)

• Regine Velasquez, gusto nang pakawala kay Ogie! (Solid na talaga.)

• Okay lang kay Anne Curtis kung makawala si Dominguez ... (Now hindi talaga okay.)

• Karylle Halili, dahang-dahan nang na pakan ana Jennylyn at Mariel (Pahiri daw?)

POPS Fernandez didn't cross paths with ex **Martin Nievera**, says manager **Arnold Vegafria**. Separate dressing rooms helped.

... and other outbreaks

• **Dennis**, 31 years long-lasts boom-ang ano-ano ay anak nila ni Carlene! (Meaning, five thousand.)

• Sunnie, asawapalit ng pare si Gabino? (While the P1,000 bills?)

• Lani Mo, walang pahi sa nakaraan ni Juliet (Same ito?)

• Vhiel magsagawa ay akin si Lord—Ada Bevilla. (To ka, Dad?)

• Ada, 25 t-t day mag-eat ka! Lord? (Top of every hour, plus one more.)

• Reza Garcia, nagbibinakit Ang Shawie? (Hihop.)

• (Sweetpeng Mick (Garcia) at Lim, two-football player ang dahilan?—Brod!)

• Kimmby, walking MM dyag tiering ng Mommy Lydia ngo!? (Nd ka kng, non-the-way how to stop ...walking around.)

• Jolina Magdangal dakand na at 2008? (Sigal na nito, a.)

• Katrina Halili, ayaw maging Dreadful (Cause as Marian Rivera?)

• "Dahil may tinagong Super Jodo"—Kitchie (Pahu-hang gmm-ota si Herbert?)

• Mind ang tips ni Bernie ang makbigaho Blue Ang Basement! (All together, girls! Hindi ang tips si Bernie ...)

(Thanks to Reader-ers and Textbud.)

SERVALDIG his wife, Gov. Francis Pangilinan fulfills his dream of singing in Araneta Coliseum.

BIANCA (2nd from left) and friends lead a video-inspired dance number for their mom.

ARMY came in full force, including Andrew Pangilinan and Marisol Lim.

THE LOUNGE
AT PODIUM
Sunday
January 13, 2008
5pm
This week at The Lounge
THE Ryan Cayabyab Singers
Ryan Cayabyab, RCS
PODIUM in ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City

ENTERTAINMENT

Josh Groban set to do more shows in RP

And Charice may return to Ellen's show

LOS ANGELES—CHARICE PEMPENGCO may once again see Ellen DeGeneres' TV shows And Josh Groban is returning to the Philippines to perform in concerts this year.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Andrew E. Antipolo

"We heard these exciting pieces of news from Ellen and Josh themselves when we bumped into them at last Wednesday's party at the home of Ten co-chair Tom Rothman and his wife, actress Jessica Harper.

Ellen, who was out in the backyard lined with patio heaters that made it possible for guests to linger outdoors amid the winter chill, gushed about Charice. She exclaimed that the young Filipina singer was "great!" The host of "The EllenDeGeneres Show" said she was glad to be helping launch Charice's career in the US. In Charice's first appearance on Ellen's show last month, she wowed everyone with her performance of "And I Am Telling You I'm Not Going" from the Broadway musical "Dreamgirls" and Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You."

Josh, who performed to two concerts in the Philippines last October, told us with a big grin, "Filipinos are the best fans in the world." He has every reason to smile these days. His Christmas album "Noel" was the best-selling album of 2007 in the UK. The warmly devoted singer is grateful to Oprah Winfrey because his guest appearance on her show boosted the sales of "Noel."

In the Parkinsons' living room, even the spat others from Celine planted herself and gave all guests last year, Drew Barrymore, looking more full-ish but with clutching hers instead of a hat, held hands with her boyfriend, actor Justin Long. The two were like teenagers madly in love.

Hollywood's current sensations

Jon Heder, star of "Napoleon Dynamite" and "Blades of Glory," said that, with the fall in filming caused by the writers' strike, he is spending his free time enjoying Evan, his nine-month old baby girl with wife Kirsten. Casey Affleck, sporting a beard, shared the happy news that he and his wife, Summer Phoenix (Joaquin's sister), just had their second baby. Their first-born, Indiana August, is now 3 years old.

In our corner, Hollywood's current sensations, Ellen Page and Diablo Cody, "Juno's" lead actress and scriptwriter, respectively, took in congratulations. The two were all over the lights-it's been that we had started in our teeny old Prius—Ellen's pregnant teenage character drives a similarly colored van in the film. Our Prius has been as much a part of our life and family history for the past 17 years that the warm sight of the identical van in "Juno" made us laugh repeatedly with fondness, all of the three times that we watched the film.

James Herbman, who directed reboot is being hailed as the year's "Little Miss Sunshine," and he wanted to "nog" that Paula shows by Ellen and which figures in one crucial scene.

Playing tough

Emile Hirsch, the breakout actor in the acclaimed Sean Penn-directed drama "Into the Wild," leaned close to a patio heater by the pool. He said that the toughest part about play-

(MORE)

CHARICE Pempengco

OPEN JANUARY 16

JON Hader, star of "Blades of Glory" and "Napoleon Dynamite."

Josh...

from page B1

ing his character, which was based on a true story of a fresh college graduate who memorizes the names of world and lists all of the wills of rivers, was asking opposite a walleye in one scene. "You just don't know what the hour would do," said the actor in search in 2006. "That was scary."

Emily and Josh are collaborating again, this time as actors, in "Hot Tub Time Travel." The film (the makers the story of California's first open-by gay elected official, Harvey Milk (Sean), who was assassinated by San Francisco Supervisor, Dan White. Emily tackles the role of Diane Jones, a gay right activist.

Matt Dillon, who has also grown a beard like Casey now, told her being able to see a free cruise trip to Antarctica and New Zealand, one of the freebies in the swag given to the nominees and presenters in the 2008 Golden Globe Awards.

At the Cinemas

GLORIETTA 1	1 DEEPAVAAM	2 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	3 I AM LEGEND	4 SAGAL SAKALI SARILOLO			
GLORIETTA 4	1 BEE MOVIE	2 SYDNEY WHITE	3? NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS				
	4 ENTONG KABOOTS 4	5 SAGAL SAKALI SARILOLO	6 I AM LEGEND	7 DEEPAVAAM			
GREENBELT 1	1 I AM LEGEND		2 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS				
GREENBELT 2	1? NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS		2? I AM LEGEND				
	3 DEEPAVAAM	4 BEE MOVIE	5 SYDNEY WHITE				
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1? I AM LEGEND		2 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS				
	3 BEE MOVIE	4 SAGAL SAKALI SARILOLO	5 DEEPAVAAM				
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	2 I AM LEGEND	3 BEE MOVIE	4 SAGAL SAKALI SARILOLO			
MARKET! MARKET!	1 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS		2 BEE MOVIE				
	3 SYDNEY WHITE	4 I AM LEGEND	5 SAGAL SAKALI SARILOLO				
TRINOMA	1 SAGAL SAKALI SARILOLO	2 DEEPAVAAM	3 NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS	4 BEE MOVIE			
	5 SYDNEY WHITE	6 ENTONG KABOOTS 4	7? I AM LEGEND				

At the Malls

Ayala Malls

Glorietta — WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3

Greenbelt — WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3

Alabang Town Center — WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3

Ayala Center Cebu — WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3

Market! Market! — WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3

Christa Glitz — Repertory Philippines presents FUROUS'S BOTH MOMMY January 11 to 27, 2007. For inquiries, pls. call 687-0710 or visit www.repertory-philippines.com

Ayala Museum — ANGEL THE MUSEUM by Jessica Zafra. Reception: 6-9 January 18, 2008, Ground Floor Gallery. For more info, pls. call 757-7117 loc 41 loc. e-mail museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

Tri Noma — Resto-Rhythmic featuring Gardeo Grooves. January 18, Fiesta Ground 1, Fiesta. WELCOME 2008 SALE January 11 to February 3

Fresh Entertainment

SAMSUNG WINNERS

THE AYALA MALLS
WELCOME
2008 SALE
JANUARY 11 TO FEBRUARY 3
Big discounts await you at participating stores.

Glorietta
Greenbelt
Alabang Town Center
Market! Market!
Trinoma

SM CINEMA

movietime SHOWTIME

Your life as a movie

IMAX

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2 - THE
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
3 BEE MOVIE
4 I AM LEGEND
5 Reserved for VICTORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
6 Reserved for VICTORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
7 DESPERADAS
8 SYDNEY WHITE
RETASO
9 I AM LEGEND
10 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO

ERMITA

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
4 I AM LEGEND
5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
6 DESPERADAS
7 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
1 SYDNEY WHITE
2 BEE MOVIE
3 NATIONAL TREASURE 2

METRO EAST

1 BEE MOVIE
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
4 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
5 SYDNEY WHITE
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
7 I AM LEGEND
8 DESPERADAS

NOVALICHES

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 I AM LEGEND
3 DESPERADAS
4 BEE MOVIE
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
6 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
7 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO

PIONEER

1 I AM LEGEND
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
3 BEE MOVIE
4 SYDNEY WHITE

STA. ROSA | **LIPA**

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 BEE MOVIE
3 I AM LEGEND
4 DESPERADAS
5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
2 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
3 SAKAL
4 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
5 DESPERADAS

DASMARINAS | **IMUS**

1 BEE MOVIE
2 I AM LEGEND
3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
5 DESPERADAS
1 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
2 I AM LEGEND
3 BEE MOVIE
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
6 DESPERADAS

ANGELES | **TARLAC**

1 I AM LEGEND
2 DESPERADAS
3 BEE MOVIE
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO

STARMILLS

1 BEE MOVIE
2 DESPERADAS
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 4
5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
5 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
9 I AM LEGEND

BACOLOD | **ILOILO**

1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 I AM LEGEND
3 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
4 DESPERADAS
5 THE GOLDEN COMPASS
6 SHAKE RATTLE and ROLL 9
1 NATIONAL TREASURE 2
2 BEE MOVIE
3 DESPERADAS
4 I AM LEGEND
5 SAKAL SAKALI SAKLOLO
6 THE GOLDEN COMPASS

another film by Crisaldo Pablo
this week at indieSine

RETASO

NOW SHOWING at indieSine
Robinsons Movieworld Galleria
JANUARY 30 to 15

for the
BEST IN
entertainment

etc

2nd AVENUE

JACK

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
THEATER MALL
PROMENADE
1 2 3 4 5
FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL 722-4222 LOC 916

MTRCB R-13
IN SPACE NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM.
ON EARTH EVERYONE WILL.
ALIENS VS PREDATOR 2
OPENS JANUARY 23

MTRCB G ALL AGES ADMITTED
ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS
TALENT COMES IN ALL SIZES
OPENS JANUARY 16

TOM Kaufman and Jessica Harper, left, opened their home for a party with guests such as Drew Barrymore and boyfriend, actor Justin Long, and Kanye West, daughter of Dara Moore and Vince Wilfo.

"JUNO" star Ellen Page, party-cohost Jessica Harper and ex-stripper, now acclaimed scriptwriter Diablo Cody.

Josh Groban . . .

From page A2

Nominees' quotes

The following are what some Golden Globe contenders said about their nominated performances, roles, or work (the winners will be announced in a press conference today, Sunday):

Marion Cotillard, responding to a question on the exhilarating nature of her film, "La Vie en rose," to chose the "bitchy" role of NBC Political talk-show personality Kathleen Turner.

"When I started working on the project, I didn't know anything about her except a few songs and the Rita Hayworth movie. I discovered the tormented behavior she could have. I didn't understand that but one day I read the script again and I read the line that asked her, 'Are you afraid of death?' She said that she was more afraid of being alone. I understood that. When you're a child and abandoned by your parents, you never want to be alone again.

"Still, she was also bad, she used it sometimes—not in a very respectful way, that's true, but my aim was to understand that woman and that is indeed understanding her dark side. I understood her...not excuse her, but accept her for who she was."

'Remarkably genuine'

Ellen Page on her smart-talking teenage character in "Juno" who is dealing with an unplanned pregnancy as created by first-time scriptwriter Diablo Cody (she had to borrow a scriptwriting manual from a library). "The screenplay is remarkably genuine, funny, droll and witty and all of those things. But at the same time, the script is so honest and clearly involves a friend with people. I think it has to do with the fact that we haven't had a female character like this who is devoid of any stereotype. She sometimes for all the characters. They're incredibly whole and beautiful. To read a script like that is astonishing—that it can hit you on so many levels and be so completely refreshing. Diablo is hands down brilliant."

Glenn Close on her upcoming lawyer, Patty Hewes, in the TV series "Damages": "I do think for some lucky like Patty I hope to have succeeded to the extent that she has in a world that's male dominated to phenomenal. Of course, she's called a bitch and destructive, ruthless. If she were a man, they might not use the same adjectives."

Daniel Day-Lewis Thomas Anderson on Daniel Day-Lewis' devotion to his role in "There Will Be Blood": "Daniel's concentration makes him different from any other actor. I've worked with his concentration is unparalleled. He inhabits the character that he's playing all the time, all day long, without exception. I've never worked with an actor that has done that. I hope I don't ever have to work with an actor who doesn't do that."

THE PERFECT MATCH THIS VALENTINE SEASON!

RICHARD Gutierrez MARIAN Rivera

My Bestfriend's Girlfriend

Love comes in unexpected packages

Directed by Mark A. Reyes V, DGPI

OPENS IN THEATERS FEB. 13

OPENS JANUARY 23

HE BROKE HER HEART WHEN HE DIED...
NOW, HE'S BACK TO MEND IT

HILARY SWANK GERARD BUTLER JEFFREY DEAN MORGAN LISA KUDROW

P.S. I Love You

SOMETIMES THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO SAY.